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Henry Oppenheim

MEMOIRS

OF THE

COUNT DE FALLOUX

VOL. II.

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LE COMTE DE FALLOUX
1884

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

COUNT DE FALLOUX

From the French

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MEMOIRS OF A ROYALIST.

CHAPTER I.

MONARCHICAL QUESTIONS—THE WIESBADEN CIRCULAR—LETTERS TO M. BERRYER—JOURNEY TO VENICE.

1850—1851.

The time having apparently come for confronting without further delay the Monarchy with the Republic, I undertook to show in a collective picture the respective situations of the different parties, in a work which the *Revue des Deux Mondes* published on the 1st of February, 1851, under the title of *Les Républicains et les Monarchistes depuis la Révolution de Février.*

My belief rested on facts too manifest not to gain by a public discussion, and I should not have considered it fair or wise to make my language less clear and precise than my ideas. Not one act or proper name was masked, and though I lived in the very society where my frankness might have given offence, I wrote with such scrupulous veracity that I did not

elicit a single rectification. In this article I said, "There is much more of repenting than of confessing in this world;" in writing which I had not only in mind my friends of the July Revolution, but also, and not without reason, the actors in that of 1848, for I knew that among the Left as well as the Centre great disappointment in the present had brought about a tendency to revert to the past.

My article terminated thus:—

"The first condition for re-entering into what is true and reasonable is to come to a common understanding on what is false and absurd. When it is acknowledged that a Republic is not always fruitful in illustrious republicans, Monarchy will be forgiven more easily for not having constantly produced great monarchs. When forced to own, by a glance at the past or the present, that the acclamation of the masses may show itself more blind in its choice than the hereditary principle with all its hazards and chances, people will be less prompt to look with scorn upon the wisdom of past ages. When the law of succession is found to have imposed upon us, in fourteen centuries, no one sovereign utterly cruel or iniquitous, and when it is seen that the law of numbers had not been two years in operation before France bowed beneath the yoke of a Robespierre, a Couthon, and a Marat, perhaps then it will be owned that no electoral mechanism will enable a country to dispense with virtues and light, and that no human institution can free humanity from its original vices and the only remedies applicable to them. Universal panaceas will be given up, the infallibilities of popular right like those of divine right. The welfare of the state will be sought by the light of experience within the limits of common sense; in that case the seekers after truth will soon find it, and it will not cost a tear."

To address the public is an elementary duty for all men who aspire to perform any action in our times. But that was not all. The Monarchy ought not to

remain in the abstract state, and, to bring events to maturity, it was imperative that a common feeling should be established between the Royalists and all the princes of the royal house.

Commencing with the Legitimists, an immense majority were to be met in the path which I venture to call the reasonable one.

M. Berryer had shed so much lustre on the Parliamentary course, and had done so with such a respect for principles, prudence, and sureness of speech, that he exercised the sovereign direction of his party by an all but unanimous agreement.

The Duc des Cars could not, in 1850, speak of the army he had not been able to show in 1848; and the Vicomte de Saint-Priest, sent to the Legislative Assembly by a southern constituency, would have been only too glad to hold a distinctive position; but, over and above his having amenity and some sound sense, he had neither the qualities nor the defects which go to make up the leader of a coterie. He did not, therefore, separate from M. Berryer until later, when he fell into the hands of leaders more wary than himself. M. de la Rochejacquelein was less circumspect; he clung to the worship of M. de Genoude, in consideration of which the *Gazette de France* had made loud protestations of fidelity to him; but there was little gravity in his life or authority in his speech, and, had it not been for the deserved prestige of his name, and the good fortune of a ringing voice, which rose above all uproar, and carried the mildest of his interruptions

in Parliament to the reporters, he would not have won any standing at all, and would have been spared the blunder of posing as M. Berryer's rival.

The other members of the Right, old or new, MM. Benoist d'Azy, de Vatimesnil, de Larcy, Béchard, de Kerdrel, de Riancey, de Laboulie, Poujoulat, and the rest, ostensibly fell into line behind the great orator.

Within the Legitimist party, at that date, every effort was made to show the country, therefore, that M. Berryer was the representative of the sentiments and intentions of the Count de Chambord, and that he, designated by the confidence of the country, was, at the same time, from all points of view and in every degree, worthy of the closest and entire confidence of the Prince himself. On their side, the Orleanists, M. Thiers as well as M. Guizot, treated with him under the impression that they were treating with the Prince in person. Only one thing was to be kept in view to make the situation in reality what it was in appearance. I had a doubt on this point, arising from some reticence on M. de Saint-Priest's part and some insinuations of the Duc des Cars, who pointedly called me "Vendean" and M. Berryer "a lawyer." But I resolved to go as soon as ever I could get away for enlightenment to the Count de Chambord, when the serious incident of Wiesbaden suddenly occurred.

The better to understand its full import, we must go back a little.

On the morning of the 26th of August, 1850, King

Louis-Philippe died at Claremont, when he was on the point of completing his seventy-seventh year. As soon as he felt the approach of death, he called Abbé Guelle, his almoner, to him, and, in presence of the Queen, his children, and grand-children, received the last sacraments with simple and resigned firmness. He yielded up his last breath surrounded by all his family and household in tears.

At the juncture when this misfortune, unexpected, albeit there had been a few premonitory symptoms, befell the exiles at Claremont, the Count de Chambord was at Wiesbaden, surrounded by a great number of Frenchmen.

He went into mourning at once, ordered a funeral service, and attended it with all the Royalists he could get together. Madame la Dauphine did the same, for a funeral service was celebrated at Frohsdorf with all the solemnity which could be observed in this majestic solitude.

M. de Salvandy was among those who had been paying their respects to the Count de Chambord on the banks of the Rhine, and he was returning into France by way of Baden when the news reached him. Instantly retracing his steps, he returned to Wiesbaden, and, after a long interview with the Count, departed for England. It was not unreasonable to believe that the hour for royal reconciliation was at hand. Many hearts turned with confidence towards the great event of which the realisation was desired by all who placed the interest of their country above personal gain or

spite. All the Frenchmen who were leaving Wiesbaden at the same time as the Prince carried away with them faith in a happier future, M. de Salvandy as well as M. Berryer.

Unfortunately this was yet another illusion.

I cannot say for certain under what influence the Count de Chambord determined to send instructions to his friends in France. He did so, without consulting any of the men of mark who had for several days been gathered around him, and without putting into his declarations that clearness which the public deemed that it had a right to expect from the august representative of French Monarchy.

This document, known as "The Wiesbaden Circular," cannot be ignored, however; in the first place, because it disturbed and delayed the negotiations reasonably believed to be on the road to success; and secondly, because it inaugurated the system of speaking without preliminary concert with the persons accredited by the country—a system which I shall have only too many occasions to deplore, and which at different times, from 1850 to 1873, deferred or wrecked all attempts at monarchical restoration.

This circular was signed by M. de Barthélemy, secretary of the Royalist Committee of the Rue Saint-Florentin, Paris, and is as follows:—

"Wiesbaden, August 30th, 1850.

"The Paris and provincial press will have already acquainted you in all its detail with the journey seemingly destined to exert a great and happy influence. You know now with what religious eagerness men from all parts of France and repre-

senting different grades of society have come to greet the descendant of Henri IV.

"In presence of the grave circumstances in which we stand, and under the menace of new complications which appear forthcoming, M. le Comte de Chambord has thus been enabled to study the situation closely.

"All our friends in the Legislative Assembly who could quit France have made it a duty to hasten to Wiesbaden, where M. le Comte de Chambord, as the newspapers will have informed you, received them each in private audience in order to obtain an exact idea of the movement of thought and the various interests of the population in each department.

"In these different interviews, and whenever there was a general gathering, M. le Comte de Chambord constantly showed how anxious he was as to the line of conduct which it was important to follow in order to keep our opinions in active progress and at the same time secure our principles against any attack.

"M. le Comte de Chambord has declared that he reserves to himself the direction of general policy.

"In view of sudden emergencies, and in order to ensue that complete unity of views and action which alone can constitute our strength, he has delegated certain persons in France to apply his policy.

"This question of conduct necessarily leads to a definite consideration of the question of an appeal to the people.

"I am officially charged to make known M. le Comte de Chambord's declaration on this subject.

"He has personally and entirely condemned this system of appeal to the people, as implying negation of the grand principle of monarchical inheritance.

"He rejects beforehand any proposition reproducing this idea and modifying the conditions of stability essential to the character of our principle, and indicating it as the sole means of at length wresting France from revolutionary convulsions.

"M. le Comte de Chambord's language was formal and precise, leaving no room for doubt, and any interpretation which altered its bearing would be essentially inexact.

"All those who went to Wiesbaden knew of this decision; they heard M. le Comte de Chambord utter it with the same firmness, while the profound emotion and the expression of true happiness

which was depicted upon all countenances seemed to promise him that this statement, coming from one in exile, would henceforward be an unvarying rule for all the Legitimists in France.

"To put an end to all the differences which have so deeply affected him, and which can only result in weakening us; to sincerely and totally discard any system which may in the least injure the rights of which he is the depositary; to return to those honourable traditions of discipline which alone can restore the sentiment for authority after so many revolutions; and to remain unalterable upon principle whilst moderate and conciliatory to all—such is the summary of all the advice M. le Comte de Chambord proffered us; we are confident that it will be fruitful in happy results.

"The main point elicited was that, the direction of general policy being reserved by M. le Comte de Chambord, no individual will be put forward in the press or elsewhere as representing this policy. Outside M. le Comte de Chambord, Legitimists will recognise only his appointed mandatories. These, as you no doubt know, are the Duc de Lévis; General de Saint-Priest, representative; for the Hérault; Berryer, representative for the Bouches-du-Rhône; the Marquis de Pastoret; and the Duc des Cars."

This circular excited violent protests, and threw the great majority of the La Rochejacquelein Royalist party into consternation. Three principal points were censured in it.

The system of appeal to the people, upheld by the *Gazette de France* and M. de la Rochejacquelein, was unequivocally condemned; but the Prince had not made a point of making, as a counterpoise to this declaration, some royal statement associating at the same time the suffrage and the wishes of France with the restoration of the Monarchy. The circular spoke of putting an end to all dissent among Legitimists, but it made no allusion to dissent among other parties,

nor did it hold out to them a pledge or at least the expression of a desire for compromise. Lastly, it seemed to place all the Count's friends under the yoke of a discipline scarcely compatible with the duties and public engagements of men invested with parliamentary membership. This same discipline was, moreover, in set terms entrusted to the hands of five men, of whom only one was of undeniable celebrity. The Ducs de Lévis and des Cars and the Marquis de Pastoret had always kept outside of parliamentary action. General de Saint-Priest, who had served in the Russian army up to 1814, had entered the diplomatic career afterwards, and having been hardly a year in the Legislative Assembly, had never made known beyond the lobby of the Palais-Bourbon that sympathy which his character readily excited. Still, by classing him among the Parliamentarians, he and M. Berryer were placed in the minority, as opposed to three men who were always in agreement from quite a different standpoint.

M. de la Rochejacquelein's letter to the editor of the *Evénement* (reprinted in the *Journal des Débats* September 22nd, 1850), in reply to the circular, showed how deeply he felt it. ". . . . In presence of the insensate document which you have published," said the deputy for the Morbihan, "I am forced to reply to what is practically my excommunication. I do not believe that Legitimacy is a mystery, or that, under the Republic any more than under the Monarchy, the representatives of France must obey

the orders of the King. I have never heard this theory broached. . . . ."

If M. de la Rochejacquelein had confined himself to this profession of faith he would have been, at the bottom if not in form, the organ of most faithful Royalists who took a serious view of their patriotic duty. Unfortunately he went further, and it was easy to foresee that in his case the difference of views must amount to absolute separation.

The attitude of the Legitimist press was saddened and embarrassed. An ambiguous letter of M. de Saint-Priest to the *Union* rather increased disquiet than dissipated it. Among the purely Conservative journals, some admitted that there had been a rupture and accepted its consequences, while others still endeavoured to conjure it away. The *Journal des Débats*, undecided between both, began by allowing epigrams to appear, and ended by some very peremptory statements. On October 1st it declared, by the pen of M. de Saint-Marc Girardin—

"We have always been convinced that the most brutalising of all despotisms is that of the greatest number, having for its instrument universal, unlimited suffrage.

"We, therefore, deny the sovereignty of the people as understood by the expounders of universal, unlimited suffrage; but we acknowledge and we proclaim most heartily National Sovereignty —in other words the right of the nation's legal organs to decide usefully for the Commonwealth.

"We do not pretend to convert the Legitimists to our doctrines, still less to obtain a solemn disavowal from them. To show that, between them and us, the difference is not so great as they assert and believe, we prefer to remark upon the effect of the Wiesbaden Circular on them. The only defect, possibly, of this

circular is that it enunciates somewhat bluntly the old doctrine of the Legitimist party. What was merely a repetition appeared to the Legitimists themselves a paradox and a challenge flung down to the spirit of our age, so much are they men of our time without knowing it and without wishing it; so much the better, though, for in that consists part of their strength. They feel what we feel, they think as we think; but they have other affections which make them believe they have other opinions. They had even neglected to a certain extent their original doctrines, never doubting that they would recognise them at first sight. Almost the contrary is what has happened to many among them, and as they have themselves changed they fancied at first that it was the doctrine which had changed. A very natural error this, but it ought to serve them as a warning. Political principles are not made to sleep in museums but to live in society, amid its ideas and customs, in order at once to rectify what is defective in them and to accommodate themselves to it by mingled perseverance and justness of mind."

It was impossible to mistake the disastrous effect of the Wiesbaden Circular, and those who drew it up were not themselves blind to the fact. The four members of the committee, in the midst of whom M. Berryer was isolated, were of varied intellect, and the one with most mind, M. de Pastoret, did not see things in a right light. Son of Chancellor de Pastoret, who played a notable part in the Constituent Assembly of 1780 and in the Chamber of Peers in the Restoration, Amédée de Pastoret had more ambition than merit. Possessor of a picture gallery not without value, and a library out of which he extracted material for quasi-historical novels, he did not believe he had yet shown his whole worth, as he wrote to M. le Comte de Chambord in a spell of ill-humour. This ill-humour made him habitually discontented with

himself and others. The reception given to his name caused him the painful sensation which a Cabinet feels when it encounters an adverse vote on the first day of office, and he showed perhaps less sincerity than eagerness in denying his share of paternity in the Wiesbaden offspring.

As for MM. de Lévis, des Cars, and de Saint-Priest, they found in their profound and entire devotedness that political tact which was not innate in them. Habitually living in the circle of their family relatives and opinions, when they stepped outside of these, they committed regrettable blunders; but when they were suddenly placed in the broad daylight and open air, and inexorably warned by public outcry, they manifested all their loyalty and love for their cause by acknowledging and frankly repairing the errors which they had unwittingly made. Consequently, they did not stubbornly defend the Wiesbaden Circular; they sincerely avowed that they had not foreseen its effect, and they unhesitatingly declared that they were desirous of grasping an occasion which would present the King's real policy under a better aspect.

M. Berryer was at the same time surprised and distressed, but he would not allow himself to be discouraged, and did his best to calm those members of the Assembly who had recently become intimate with him. Without allowing a murmur to escape him in public, and without seeking for any open reparation for the use of his name without his knowledge, he more especially applied himself to making the Prince understand

the importance and the urgency of an authentic manifestation which would leave no trace of this unfortunate document.

On two points it was easy to come to an agreement: first, that the Committee of Five should be fused in a more numerous body, one in closer relation with public opinion; next, that the Count de Chambord should himself formulate a programme to be deliberated upon, weighed and revised before publication, like a speech from the throne, by the principal representatives of the Monarchical party.

I held long conversations on the necessity of these two measures with the Duc de Lévis and des Cars and General de Saint-Priest. The Duc des Cars was the one whose attitude touched me the most, as he had such a long way to come, and yet he was the most ardent in proposing and favouring the addition of fresh members. These were the Duc de Noailles and the Duc de Clermont-Tonnerre, who had always belonged to the Moderate Right in the Chamber of Peers, the Duc de Valmy, grandson of Marshal Kellerman, who had been in the diplomatic service some years under Charles X. and Louis-Philippe, and had since ostensibly rallied to the Legitimist cause; M. de Vatimesnil, a member of the Martignac Cabinet, M. Benoist d'Azy, M. de Rainneville, and the present writer, the latter of whom had never been separated from M. Berryer since their entrance into parliamentary life.

I was in Anjou (where I had hastened to my mother's deathbed) when I was informed of the honour bestowed

upon me by the following letter from M. le Comte de Chambord:—

"Frohsdorf, December 2nd, 1850.

"MONSIEUR LE VICOMTE,

"Many of our friends assemble once a week to attend to our affairs. I have long been anxious that you should join them, but your position did not allow of it. As nothing at present stands in the way, I appeal to your devotion, happy to afford you this fresh proof of the well-founded trust I have in you, and a fresh means of serving a cause which is that of France. MM. Berryer, des Cars, de Pastoret, and de Saint-Priest, will communicate to you all the information upon the subject of which you may stand in need.

"I have learnt with satisfaction what a salutary effect your speech produced under quite recent circumstances.

"Receive here the expression of my gratitude, Monsieur, as well as the assurance of my most sincere and constant affection.

"HENRI."

I was then so overcome with grief that I doubted whether I should ever return to Paris and the Assembly, and I deemed it my duty not to disguise this from M. le Comte de Chambord in thanking him in the following terms:—

"MONSEIGNEUR,

"At the juncture when you deigned to think of me the greatest of sorrows had befallen me. I had lost a mother to whom I owed so much, including the feeling of unalterable devotion to you, Monseigneur, which she held so close to her heart. Although a fresh kindness on your part, Monseigneur, is the greatest comfort I could receive, even that is powerless to restore me the strength which has been crushed out of me. It is very painful for me to have to acknowledge that I am a useless servitor, Monseigneur, but the persistence of the blows which have befallen me will be only too valid an excuse.

"I am not in a position to say when I shall be fit to return to Paris and the Assembly, but if the little health left me allows

me to move it will be at Venice that I shall hope to pay Monseigneur the homage of the profound respect with which I am,

"Monseigneur, your most humble and faithful servant,

"A. DE FALLOUX."

I took little part in the deliberations of the new Committee, which met in the Marquis de Pastoret's handsome mansion on the Place Louis XV.; but every member remained true to the pledge to elicit some statement from the Count de Chambord. The opportunity soon came, and when it did it was natural, complete, and startling.

On the 15th of January, 1851, M. Berryer appeared in the tribune to support the protest of M. de Rémusat against the removal of General Changarnier, commanding the army of Paris. With an incomparable tone and the most absolute frankness, he raised the question of Monarchy and of fusion, indissolubly bound up with it. After having uttered a warm eulogy of the valour and patriotism of the Orleans princes, he explained his recent journey to Wiesbaden, saying: "I went there with a large number of my friends to see another exile who is a stranger to all the events occurring in this country; he is exiled because he bears in him the principle which, during a long succession of ages, regulated the transmission of public sovereignty in France; he is exiled because the establishment of any new government in France is necessarily a law of proscription against him; he is exiled, in short, allow me to say so, because he cannot set his foot on the soil of this France which his

ancestors conquered, aggrandised, and constituted, without being the foremost of Frenchmen, the King!" (Great applause from the Right; outcries and murmurs from the Left.)*

M. Berryer went on to draw a bold sketch of what would henceforward be the future and the mission of rejuvenated royalty.

The effect of this speech was immense, and it was unanimously resolved at M. de Pastoret's that the Count de Chambord should be asked to publicly sanction M. Berryer's language. An appointment was made at the Duc de Noailles' between M. Molé, M. Guizot, and the members of the Legitimist Committee then in Paris to draft, by common assent, the letter proposed for the Prince's signature. It was written that evening, and was to be taken to Venice with great speed, in order that it might be brought back to France against when it might be wanted. This message, on which depended so many hopes, was confided to one of my personal friends, M. de Bertou. Without taking an hour's rest, in the heart of winter, he crossed the Alps and Northern Italy. The approval of the Count de Chambord was not for an instant in suspense. He quickly evinced the gratification caused him by this step, made a few happy modifications in the draft letter, all in keeping with the spirit which inspired the document, and returned it so rectified by his own hand to M. de Bertou, who brought it back to Paris with the same promptness. At six in the morning he came to M.

* *Le Moniteur*, January 16th, 1851.

Berryer's house, the latter being still asleep. M. de Bertou's first words so pleased him that he rose and embraced him with an emotion well warranted by his patriotism, for this letter was the manifesto of a Monarchy which might save France. The principal passages are given below:—

"Venice, January 23rd, 1851.

"My dear Berryer,

"Although I regret to see my thoughts and intentions sometimes mistaken and distorted, you know that the interest of France, which I put above everything, often dooms me to silence and inaction, so unwilling am I to disturb her repose and add to the difficulties and embarrassments of the political situation. How happy I am, then, at your having so well expressed sentiments of my own, in perfect accordance with the language and conduct I have at all times held.

"You have remembered this. For that policy of union, conciliation, and fusion, which is my own, you have most eloquently set it forth; it buries in oblivion all divisions, all recrimination and past opposition, its aim being that everybody should have a future in which each honest man will feel himself, as you so well say, in full possession of his personal worth.

"Depositary of the fundamental principle of Monarchy, I know that this Monarchy would not answer all the requirements of France if it were not in harmony with her social condition, manners, and interests, and unless France recognises the need of it and confidently accepts it. I respect my country as much as I love her. I honour her civilisation and her contemporary glory, as well as the traditions and memories of her history. The maxims which she cherishes so closely and which you have recalled in the tribune, equality before the law, liberty of conscience, free access of talent to all posts, all honours, and all social advantages—all these great principles of an enlightened Christian society are dear and sacred to me as to you and to all Frenchmen."

This manifesto put the future of royalty back into its true course. If it did not obtain adhesion every-

where, at least it was universally applauded; the gates of France were not opened as yet, but many an obstacle was smoothed away.

The occasion appeared favourable for my projected journey to Venice. My wife and daughter, who had remained at Nice, summoned me thither, and I wrote to M. Berryer from Anjou, where I was finishing the settlement of some family matters, to ask him to confer with me once more before I went into Italy. Travelling and a stay in Paris always fatigued me so much, and I felt so strong a need to husband my strength for the long journey, that I begged of M. Berryer an interview at Orleans, where I should have to leave the railway in order to post across the centre of France and reach Nice as directly as possible. Not only did M. Berryer have the goodness to agree to this, but the Duc de Noailles and the Duc de Valmy kindly joined him, all three coming to spend four-and-twenty hours with me at Orleans. When I resumed my journey I was in perfect harmony with them, and well furnished with instructions.

As soon as I arrived at Nice I wrote to the Duc de Lévis to ask him for the Count de Chambord's orders, and received the following reply:—

"Monsieur le Vicomte,

"I have only this instant received the note you did me the honour to write to me, and I hasten to tell you that I submitted it to M. le Comte de Chambord. He bids me say that he is deeply affected and grateful for the feeling which has made you brave the fatigue of a long journey to come to him. Hoping that your health will not suffer too much, he accepts with eager-

ness your visit and the occasion for lengthy and confidential interviews which he has long desired and values greatly.

"I will now tell you what his movements are, in order that you may regulate your own accordingly. Monseigneur intends to pay a visit at once to his sister, Madame la Duchesse de Parme, and his brother-in-law, M. le Duc de Modène. He will probably leave here on the 9th or 10th of March; will be at Parma on the 10th or 11th, staying there two days; will be at Modena on the 14th, for a stay of three or four days; and, finally, will return to Venice by the 20th of March at the latest.

"Compelled to go to France myself at the end of March, I much hope it will be possible for you to arrive here about the 20th, for I should be really distressed at missing this good opportunity of seeing you again and conferring with you on all the great interests to which we are equally devoted. Besides, you may agree with me that before we meet again soon in France, under circumstances which may be grave, it will not be amiss for us to see one another.

"I beg you, Monsieur le Vicomte, to accept this new assurance of my high consideration, and the most sincere and faithful attachment which I have pledged to you.

"D. DE LÉVIS."

"Venice, 27th February, 1851."

As my mother-in-law was at Nice, I left my daughter with her while I took my wife with me, and she well deserved to be associated with such a journey. I was especially anxious to present her to Madame la Dauphine.

"You will see M. le Comte de Chambord again in France," I said; "but it is doubtful whether you will the daughter of Louis XVI. It is an honour and a souvenir not to be let slip, but to be treasured up with jealous care." It is not often that anything so keenly looked forward to comes up to expectation; but my

wife often told me that she was not in the least disappointed.

The Comte de Chambord was then in the fulness of his prestige. His head had all its nobleness of carriage, his look all its limpidity, and his voice its whole clearness. His easy and active gait made up for the limp which was the result of an accident.

The Countess de Chambord was tall and of distinguished appearance. Her countenance breathed out benevolence but also melancholy, as though she were under the sway of gloomy forebodings and felt embarrassed before Frenchmen at not having fortified the throne by bearing children to her husband.

Madame la Dauphine was pathos personified, if it may be so expressed. Sadness was impressed on her features and attitude, but at the same time there was also reflected unutterable meekness and resignation. Even when her tone was abrupt, which often happened, the goodness of her intentions was transparent. Many members of my family had been dear to her; my mother, born in the Château de Versailles, had been brought up with her; my great-grandmother, the Baroness de Mackau, remained the object of her veneration; she was good enough to speak of her to me several times. Besides, she liked to recall all the French of her acquaintance. She kept herself closely informed on all family events, and had a rare fidelity of memory as to the least details. It was clear that her thoughts constantly returned to friends and places from which exile separated her.

"How dearly Madame loves France!" I remarked to her one day.

"That is not astonishing," she replied with her invariable simplicity, "that is due to my relatives."

These relatives were Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, and Madame Elizabeth.

She also used to speak in indescribable tones of the Count de Chambord. In her eyes he took precedence of everything and everybody. She watched for the faintest impression made on persons approaching her nephew and the least incidents connected with him. Politically, it may be, she did not see all that was required to reconquer France; but she was instinctively aware of it with uncommon exactitude. She entertained the most liberal ideas as regards the marriage most desirable for the Count de Chambord. She said that she had at first thought of a beautiful Polish noblewoman. Said to be haughty, she yet descended to humility when she questioned any one about her nephew. I will recall one instance which is somewhat delicate to mention, as it concerns myself, but I quote it nevertheless because it is so typical. One day, when I was returning from a long interview with the Count, she laid her hand heavily on my arm, saying—

"Monsieur de Falloux, answer me frankly. What do you think of my nephew?"

I replied by praising him most sincerely.

"I am very glad that you esteem him so much," she rejoined.

Such sayings, great from their simplicity, were frequent with her. She uttered them without dwelling on them, or thinking of their value, while continuing her tapestry work, which she seldom stopped, perhaps because it was for a prize in French charitable lotteries. She had, moreover, a marked straightforwardness of judgment, arising from her continuing naturally, without pride or disdain, to think as she had been educated to do, and to consider France as divided into three classes. One evening she said to me, "When did you learn to make speeches, for you never have appeared at the bar?" When I answered that in the first place I was not a good speaker, and in any case had nobody to thank for my training, as I had never even been in a *parlotte* (debating club), she laughed most heartily at the word and remarked, "But that is a capital idea: it ought to be very good for young men."

The Count de Chambord resided in the Cavalli Palace, on the bank of the Grand Canal, a short distance from the Vandramini Palace, occupied by the Duchesse de Berry. Count Lucchesi filled the functions of high steward of her household, and his attitude never ceased to be in keeping with his office. The Duchesse de Berry seldom talked politics, and seemed little consulted by her son. But when there was an opening given her she freely uttered most moderate sentiments. She questioned me greatly about Louis Napoleon, and she told me one day that she would willingly have attached the House of Bonaparte to

that of Bourbon by his marriage with a Neapolitan princess.

Don Juan, Infante of Spain, married to an Archduchess of Modena, sister of the Countess de Chambord, also resided at Venice, but in great seclusion. He only called in the morning, and that very rarely, at the Cavalli or the Vandramini Palaces. His son, Don Carlos, then one or two years old, was a baby of rare beauty.

The Count de Chambord made a point of marking, under all forms, the difference he made and wished between the Legitimist question in France and that in Spain. "In France," he would say, "a man is or is not a Legitimist, but at least he knows what he is about. In Spain, on the contrary, there is a very great deal to be said on both sides." With high impartiality he would develop the two theses, interweaving occasionally some good-humoured joke about the far from dignified life of his princely brother-in-law. "You were lucky to find him at home," he said one day to me, "for he spends his life in a tub in the marshes, watching for wild ducks."

Nothing could exceed the kind graciousness of the Count towards me. From the outset he deigned to express his gratification at my journey, and he was touchingly persistent about my health. In asking me to dinner, he would inquire if I were under any diet, expressing his desire that I should follow it under his roof. Many times in the course of the evening he would press me to take a seat when everybody about

the reception-room would be standing. When thanking him respectfully, I would repeat over and over again that my legs were stronger than my head, he would say in the most friendly tones, "Ah, I see that I was unreasonably apprehensive about you. You will soon be well, and nobody in France will rejoice at it more than I shall do here." He knew that I was accompanied by my good Vendean servant, the faithful Marquet, and he intimated his wish to see him, and kindly bade him take great care of me.

The Emperor of Austria came to Venice at this date; it was the first time he had been to Italy since the 1848 risings. Marshal Radetzki awaited him on St. Mark's Square. Everyone was curious to see what kind of a reception the population would give him. The Count de Chambord was anxious to be a witness of it, and took a place in a gallery of the Doge's Palace, where he had me to sit beside him.

The Emperor was to come by sea from Trieste, which prevented any precise calculation being made as to the hour of his arrival. We had to wait several hours, and the Count passed part of the time in discussing with me the question of universal suffrage. He was rather in favour of it, more than reason warranted perhaps, certainly more than I was, and he expressed his doubts as to the measure of the 31st of May, which either had already been or was about to be introduced.

The Emperor Francis Joseph, who was cordially received, went first into St. Mark's, and thence to the

Palace, where the Count de Chambord hastened to visit him. The Prince honoured me still further by taking me with him and presenting me as a nephew of the Count de Bombelles, who had been governor of the young Archduke elevated to the throne by the abdication of his father, the Archduke Francis. To this good fortune I owed the honour of being invited to dinner by the young Emperor, who already showed the sound qualities which he has since exhibited during his reign.

I found further developed in the Count de Chambord, the gifts which had previously struck me in 1840 at Rome and Verona. Would it have been the same from a political point of view? I was impatient to ascertain this, for I should have regarded my journey as lost if I had brought nothing back with me for the benefit of France.

On the day after my arrival I had an opportunity of showing my feelings and of enabling the Prince to pronounce upon them. Count Theodore de Quatrebarbes and myself had arrived at the same time in Venice, without any previous arrangement to that effect; indeed, we were at first rather annoyed at it. In the evening, while in the Prince's drawing-room, I said to Count de Quatrebarbes, "My dear friend, you know that our hearts hold the same language to the Prince, but I give you fair warning that on some points I shall be forced to put him on his guard against your optimism."

"I reckoned on that," replied M. de Quatrebarbes,

and then, with that kindliness he had for everybody and the friendliness he had for me, he added, "But I shall not imitate your example, for I shall exhort the King to have full confidence in you."

On the two following mornings the Prince granted me an audience, at first alone, and then, at my request, with the Duc de Lévis, whom I preferred to have present than to know that he was waiting outside the door. M. de Quatrebarbes served as a starting point for our political conversation, which I opened as follows :—

"Monseigneur, you cannot have a more devoted friend than the Count de Quatrebarbes; but his eminent mind sometimes clings to illusions. He always sees the Vendée of the past, and he cannot make up his mind to see that of the present."

"Oh, I am well aware of that!" replied the Prince, with a cheerful and open laugh. "Quatrebarbes is a downright knight of old; but he regulates politics by prophecies."

"Indeed, Monseigneur, that is a weakness of his; but apart from this he is a most distinguished man of affairs, and a very experienced member of our General Committee.

From the Count de Quatrebarbes to the Duc des Cars there was but a step, and it was soon taken.

"You need not be alarmed in this quarter," said the Count presently, "the Duc des Cars also harbours illusions which I do not share. He flatters himself that he can at any given moment raise an army of

two hundred thousand men; but I know perfectly well that he could hardly raise half that number."

I could not conceal my surprise at this, and I was silent for an instant, thus allowing the Prince to see how reluctant I was to afflict or contradict him. I then proceeded, slowly but firmly—

"M. le Duc des Cars has no more a hundred thousand than two hundred thousand men at his command, and it is of importance that Monseigneur should have that point settled. The duke has four or five thousand men scattered over the West and South who would volunteer or let themselves be enrolled, some ready to sacrifice their lives to the Royalist cause, some who would want time to reflect over it, a few who are already enlisted in the secret police."

"You are yourself exaggerating now," replied the Prince. But he did not break off the conversation, and it was agreed that we should go thoroughly into the subject the next day, when I said—

"According to my way of thinking the first point to be settled before tracing out a line of conduct is to know whether or not there is a military party in France. In the event of arms being taken up a totally different policy is required from that which would be demanded by an appeal to public opinion through the press and the platform.

"These two policies cannot be carried on simultaneously without one annulling the other. Any one who undertook them would experience the drawbacks of both and the benefit of neither. Men of the sword

and men of the gown cannot understand each other, for they are mutually suspicious of each other. The public would not be long before they found out this, for it is impossible to keep things secret in our country and our times.

"At this double game, Monseigneur, you would be risking a stake which you cannot afford, namely, the honour and authority of your word. Your constitutional sincerity would be disbelieved if you were supposed to have a military *arrière-pensée*, and, on the other hand, the men who prefer a more energetic course of action would not see without displeasure—and allow me to add, Monseigneur, without distrust—your engaging yourself with men of parliamentary policy. This would certainly lead almost all France to mistake your real intentions. You would be under the incessant risk of injury from the rumours which always leak out with regard to secret associations.

"On the day when your friends, in the heart of the population and in Parliament, had made progress enough in public opinion to alarm the existing Government, the Duc des Cars and his agents would be indicted at the Assizes, their correspondence would be seized, and the enemy would be delighted to hold you up to the country as one caught in *flagrante delicto* of re-establishing the old form of rule imagined and imposed by force. Monarchical hopes would suddenly vanish, and you would fall a victim to an imprudent act which would be inevitably qualified as unpardonable.

"La Vendée is an admirable page of history, but it is mainly a page of religious history. Its heroism sprang from the ardour of its faith. For the Vendeans, the King was above all the Avenger and the Guarantee of the unwritten rights of their conscience. Nothing of the kind can exist to-day. The very land does not lend itself to it at present. La Vendée was formerly inaccessible to artillery and cavalry. The peasants fought behind hedges like soldiers behind ramparts. Now the West of France is open to the most active trade and circulation is very easy; our manners and our civilisation are more sparing of human life and take another view of the duties of patriotism. This merit at all events may be accorded them in compensation, alas! of many aberrations. At all events, there is no need to condemn the past, we only need avoid taking it as *a model* for the present."

The Prince protested strongly but cordially. He often repeated, "You deceive yourself." But he never imposed silence upon me. It was clear that he had habits of thought, affections, and hopes which he would not readily throw off, but still he was willing to hear the truth.

The Duc de Lévis supported me in many points, and he finally proposed a means of conciliation which he summarised thus—

"The Duc des Cars and his friends do M. Berryer and his friends more justice than M. de Falloux supposes. Hence both should see more of each other

and discuss together, and frankly, the points on which they mutually regard each other as blind and imprudent."

"If," I rejoined, "the Duc des Cars will kindly confide his plans to me with an authorisation to repeat them to M. Berryer, I hereby undertake, in M. Berryer's name as well as my own, to keep nothing back from the Duke of our own thoughts and views as to the future of the Monarchy."

"I have no reason to oppose this," said the Count graciously, "and I can only gain in either hypothesis. So we will regard that as settled. When you return to Paris you will find the Duc des Cars fully informed of all we have said as regards himself, and formally requested to concert henceforth with M. Berryer as well as with you."

My laborious audiences having ended in this good result, I passed on to the second aim of my journey, which was to trace out to the Prince a faithful picture of the parties in the Assembly. At that date, it was easy to foresee that the keystone would be the revision of the Constitution. This subject was less personal, and consequently less delicate than the preceding one. The Prince had not come to any conclusion in this matter; he had only one cause for anxiety, to wit the prorogation of the powers of Louis Napoleon. It was easy for me to show how M. Berryer and his friends had been not a little deceived on that head; but when I had given the Count de Chambord a detailed account of what had passed between us, and

demonstrated, as it was easy to do, that we considered the Presidency merely as a stepping stone to the Empire, he appeared relieved, and in my presence gave the Duc de Lévis the clearest instructions for him to make known beforehand—as he was to be in Paris a few days in advance of me—that he was of M. Berryer's opinion on the Revision, that he wished no one to differ from him on that question, and that I was formally authorised to declare so in his name. All these points being settled, I was justified in regarding as complete the success of the ideas which I had come to Venice to plead. Still I did not conceal from myself that even when the battle is won, the field must be made secure. I persisted, therefore, on the question of persons as the indispensable complement of the ideas. Taking good care to avoid all personalities, I ventured to represent to the Prince that a sort of political court was necessary to keep up that movement of the mind which allows everything to be judged because it allows everything to be learned.

I quoted to the Count the fine maxims and reflections of Bossuet, on which princes can never meditate too long.

"The greatest derangement of the mind is to believe that things exist because we wish them to exist. It is sometimes annoying to be contradicted, but it is dangerous never to be. The most fatal adulation to a king would be the mediocrity of the men with whom he is habitually in contact—a

mediocrity which, by giving him the impression of a factitious superiority, would accustom him to act merely on his own judgment."

I also quoted Machiavelli's warning, "A prince is judged by his company;" and I added—for the conscience, which forbids one to beard the lion sometimes compels one to anger him—that a weapon was made against the Prince in France of the too frequent absence from Frohsdorf and Venice of politicians of note, and that the most intelligible and most reassuring commentary for the country on the recent letters to M. Berryer would be a more habitual stay at the Count de Chambord's residence of men whose names were in themselves symbols. Monseigneur admitted, in principle, that I was right, and as the permanency of the legislative session deprived its leading members of their liberty, he naturally looked to men like the Ducs de Noailles and de Valmy, who were not members of the Assembly. It was arranged that the Duc de Lévis, on arriving in Paris, should give them an invitation in the Count de Chambord's name to make a prolonged stay at Frohsdorf.

This point gained, I returned to France with deep gratitude, fortified hope, and renewed ardour.

CHAPTER II.

REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

1851.

It is of importance to note that the first idea of revising the Constitution of the Republic came from the Elysée. No party, save that in possession of power, had any motive to press it, and none were in a position to affront resolutely such an eventuality. It was dating from the Ministry of the 31st October, 1849, that the Bonapartist movement assumed daily more confidence and audacity. I say more audacity, for I cannot say more frankness, as the President, either from discouragement or from dissimulation, appeared now to drop, now to take up again with his ambitious projects, having recourse first to military reviews on the plain of Satory and then to speeches in the country. At Satory, where he would gallop up surrounded by a showy staff, managing a charger with rare dexterity, he was hailed by the troops with shouts of "Vive Napoleon!" and even with "Vive l'Empereur!" In his tours and speeches he showed more hesitation.

At St. Quentin, where he went to visit a brilliant

exhibition of the local industries, the foremen and workmen formed a compact throng around him. He was greeted with fervent acclamations, and calling for silence with a repressive gesture of the hand, he seized the occasion to utter in public words analogous to those addressed to M. de Rességuier in the interview I have recorded.

"I am happy," he said to the workmen gathered around him, "to stand amongst you, for I seek with pleasure every such occasion which places me in contact with the great and generous people who elected me. For, let me remark, my most sincere friends are not in palaces, but under the thatch—not amid gilded hangings, but in the workshops and in the fields. As the Emperor said, I feel that my heart replies to yours, and that we have the same interests as well as the same instincts."

These words, which soon got transmitted to the Assembly, excited great irritation there. Shortly afterwards they were followed by another speech made at a banquet offered by the town. The President said—

"If I were always free to carry out my wishes I should come among you without any pomp and ceremony. I should come unknown to mingle in your labour as in your merry-making, the better to judge myself of your feelings and your desires. But it seems that fate incessantly rears a barrier between you and me, and it is my regret that I cannot be a plain citizen of my country. As you know, I passed six years only

a few miles from this town, but walls and moats separated me from you. And now the duties of an official position keep me at a distance, so that you hardly know me, and my acts, like my sentiments, are incessantly misinterpreted."

Another time he thus expressed himself, in a message read to the Chamber by M. Baroche :—

"Everybody but myself is now allowed to expedite the revision of our fundamental law. If the Constitution contains flaws and dangers you are all free to point them out to the country ; I alone, bound by my oath, must confine myself within the strict limits it lays down to me." *

These contradictory demonstrations had their counterpart in the Assembly. Some said, "This language is sincere and praiseworthy;" others, "It is very cunning and highly dangerous;" or else, "The disappointment of not meeting with more sympathy in the higher ranks of politicians is constantly making him aspire for a less stormy existence;" or yet again, "He is designedly letting us catch a glimpse of unconstitutional designs before he boldly parades them or imposes them upon us." Some, again, were sure that these two contradictory attitudes were both equally genuine; that the emotion of the time being, and the composition of the audience readily reacted upon him, while at bottom he was inwardly divided between two counter inclinations, and that his language was dictated by the sincere impression of the moment.

* *Moniteur*, Nov. 13th, 1850.

Those who were of the last opinion fancied they knew that the President's views had the more ardour or the more disinterestedness, according as he reverted to the dreams of his childhood and the adventures of his youth, or as he dwelt upon the indifference which he met with at Strasburg and Boulogne and the oblivion in which France had left him during his long captivity; particularly when he contemplated with saddened emotion the sight he had had under his eyes for the last two years. Then, it was said, he began to doubt himself as he did others; he took alarm at the dispersion and wasting away of social forces, and he might have been surprised meditating thoughts of abdication one minute and of ambitious plots the next.

Whatever error or sagacity there may have been in these various prognostics, a relative security reigned in the Assembly, so long as the army of Paris remained under the command of Changarnier, who was then termed "The Sphinx." Indeed, he never breathed his inmost thoughts to any one; but there was one point on which the majority were agreed about him, viz. that he would, in any event, be the incorruptible champion of that majority, and that he would serve, according to the event, as a sword or a shield. Hence the struggle did not seriously and definitely begin between the President and the Assembly until the removal of the General in whom the Assembly placed its trust.

This removal—which would have been a capital event under whatever circumstances it took place—

was further aggravated by the occasion chosen, as if out of bravado. In an official order of the day, General Neumayer had reminded the troops that they were not to utter any cry while under arms; he was dismissed upon the following day. Changarnier having maintained the same instructions, he was immolated in his turn. General Baraguay d'Hilliers received the command of the army of Paris, and General Perrault that of the National Guard. It was a challenge, and understood as such. M. de Rémusat took the lead in the protest of the Assembly.*

M. Baroche upheld the measure in the name of the Government, and tried to justify it in these terms:—

"By the exceptional importance of his command and the exorbitant situation which has made him a third power, General Changarnier, without wishing it, without being aware of it, in spite of himself—I do not say this from the pressure of the present situation, for I have written it—has become the cynosure of the different parties." ("True!" from the Left and the Right.) "All who regard the present state of things as transitory or precarious, have got into the way of expecting that when the day comes for France to be called to deliberate on her destiny the political influence of the honourable General—the influence which his high command gives him—placed in one of the scales will weigh heavily and powerfully in favour of the party to which his conscience and his affections

* See the *Moniteur* for the sittings of January 3rd, 10th, 15th, 16th, and 17th, 1851.

will have attached him. . . . . We have not thought it our duty, nor has it been in our power, to allow this influence, which is not to all appearance in the constitution, to become perpetuated, consolidated and fortified by its duration, and we have been desirous that for the grand national deliberation—permit me to say—the constitutional field should be completely cleared, so that the national will may make itself felt without any difficulty or obstacle. . . . . We think that the measure we have taken cannot be disapproved by any one who is really and sincerely a partisan of the national sovereignty."

M. Baroche was resolved to go further still in his profession of constitutional faith: he thus terminated his peroration, which was too far-fetched to be persuasive—

"Messieurs, there are two, nay three things to which we will not submit. We will not have a monarchical restoration, neither of the elder nor the younger branch, and the third thing which we will not have is an imperial restoration." ("Very well said," from the Left.) "The country is weary, frightened at these restorations which destroy one another, and sooner or later amass new ruins on the previous heaps. I do not know what the future reserves for France, but you will allow me to remind you of this sentence in the message: 'Never let passion surprise or violence decide the fate of a great nation.' We are fully convinced that, for the present, the only safety for France is on new ground, that of the Republican Govern-

ment. It is from that legal and constitutional ground that we appeal to the good citizens in all parties."

I remember that, after reading this speech, Madame Swetchine said to me, "How can a man compromise himself so?" She was not the only person in France to ask the question.

M. Baroche returned to the Ministerial bench amid great agitation, but a solemn silence was suddenly established as soon as General Changarnier was seen proceeding towards the tribune. He slowly ascended the steps, and uttered these curt words in an emotional but soldierly voice—

"When the Government preceding that of the President of the Republic established my head-quarters at the Tuileries five parties divided France, as they unfortunately still divide it: the Moderate Republicans, the friends of the traditional monarchy, those of the conventional monarchy, the demagogues who call themselves by other names, and lastly the men who wish for the imperial dictatorship, even without the glory and the genius of the immortal man of whom the universe still speaks." (Sensation.)

"I have not cared to be, and I have not been the instrument of any of these parties. I have only wished what all honest men seek: the execution of the laws, the maintenance of order, the resumption of commercial transactions, the security of this great city and that of the whole of France; and I have the proud satisfaction of having in some small measure contributed to give you these boons.

"Notwithstanding odious insinuations, propagated by ingratitude, I have favoured no faction, no conspiracy, and the two parties last mentioned (the demagogues and the Bonapartists) have vowed me well-deserved hatred, which to my honour will outlive my fall.

"I might have anticipated this fall by my resignation, which would have been gladly received; but are those who think that I ought to have sent it in quite sure that my presence at the Tuileries would not have been useful to them? Messieurs, my sword is condemned to at least a momentary repose, but it is not broken, and if the country needs it any day she will find it ever devoted, and only obeying the inspirations of a patriotic heart and a firm mind, highly disdainful of the frippery of sham grandeur!" (Deep sensation, prolonged and loud tokens of approval.)

These noble and prophetic words were no doubt remembered by General Changarnier when, twenty years later, he went to be beleaguered in Metz and refused the highest grade of the Legion of Honour.

One man alone could still captivate attention in this solemn explanation before France, and this was M. Thiers. No one, perhaps, since Voltaire has spoken the French language with as much finesse and clearness as he did. This oratorical joust was one of those in which his gifts shone without alloy in their most vivid lustre. Nothing was left in the shade, neither in his own mind nor in that of others. He had the art to make everything stand out clear in the past, present, and future,

without exposing himself in the least to the reproach of exaggeration or provocation. He enfolded his contradictors in a net so tightly drawn that they could not escape without undergoing severe pressure.

When M. de Ségur d'Aguesseau, a very fiery supporter of the Elysée party, cried out, "What is your opinion of Wiesbaden?" M. Thiers replied, "Allow me to leave you and the Ministers the task of dissolving the majority. I do not wish to take that on myself."

M. de Ségur d'Aguesseau rose, but the disapproving murmur of the Assembly covered his voice, and M. Dupin (the President) gave him this cutting reprimand—

"You have no right to speak, no right to put questions to the members in possession of the floor, and you always interrupt clumsily."

M. Thiers, resuming his speech, terminated it thus: "When two opposing powers come into collision, there is a disagreement, it is true, if the one who first moved is obliged to recede; but if the assailed party yields, then its weakness is so evident to all eyes that it is lost. For my part I have only one word to add, there are two powers now in the State, the executive and the legislative. If the Assembly gives way this day, there will be no more than one, and then the form of government will be changed. The word and the form will come, when they come matters little; but what you say that you do not wish, if the Assembly yields, you will have obtained this very day; there

will be but one power. The name may come later, but the Empire will have been made."

From that day and that speech the situation was clearly comprehended from one end of France to the other. The President and the Assembly had not yet crossed blades, but the duel was imminent and henceforth inevitable. The 1848 Constitution was no more than a truce.

Still, granting that the Constitution was the starting point, it yet remained to be seen what was the goal to which we were tending. This was what France wanted her representatives to tell her. They adjourned the discussion of the amendment without finding any solution. This may be deplored, or at least considered as regrettable and premature, but it arose from irresistible currents against which individual effort was impotent.

"Uncertainty is the consumption of States," said M. Villemain.* France was conscious of being attacked by this malady, but she also felt capable of cure, and endeavoured to be cured. In 1848 there had been an attempt to organise on paper, by a ballot, a society without any past or future. Imaginations and interests were forbidden to move beyond a circle of four years, but imaginations, and interests still less, do not allow themselves to be thus confined. They have soon traversed this brief span, and they demand surer and longer perspectives. Public powers do not move merely for the pleasure of moving, as private citizens

* *Souvenirs contemporains*, p. 78.

walk for a stroll, and when they enter upon a road they desire they are entitled to know whither that road will lead them.

Theoretically, all the respectable people in the country and all the members of the majority in the Assembly had the same programme—a stable government and genuine liberty enlightened by experience. Everybody wanted this, but of whom were they to ask it? To prolong the President's powers was the solution of men in a hurry, who, bitterly undeceived as regards freedom, only aspired for order and hastened to grasp it, no matter with what hands.

A desire caressed by many men of mark was to reconstitute with the House of Orleans the régime which fell in 1848, but they were aware that they could rely only on their personal sympathies, and that it would be difficult to bring back a country, to which so many mirages had been held up during two years, to the exact point where the great catastrophe of February of that year had found it.

The third system, which consisted in setting aside all provisional expedients, and undertaking nothing not logical and durable, was that which met at once with the most solid support and the most stubborn obstacles.

Yet the Assembly was guided in its majority by so patriotic a feeling that it, I believe I can assert, would have rallied to the solution which gave authority the broadest basis, freedom the surest guarantee, and the closest reconciliation of hearts and minds the noblest example, if the Royal house itself had addressed a fit

appeal to the people. It was, therefore, personal questions which held everything in suspense and peril, and not questions of principles.

The Royalists of the Restoration had gradually become wise Liberals. The 1830 Liberals had learnt that thrones are not to be shattered with impunity, and that many things go down with them. Men hitherto considered as the most immovable upholders of an old-fashioned and suspicious liberalism already professed sentiments which, shortly after the 2nd of December, they consigned in a note addressed to the Count de Chambord. This ran—

". . . . . A traditional power, naturally resting upon the intellectual and superior classes of the nation, gives every possible guarantee that, in its hands, liberty will not be directed against order. More than any other, it responds to the idea of a regular and moderate liberty which is to be found at the bottom of the French mind, even in the midst of the anti-liberal current into which the dread of Socialism has precipitated it.

"It is more necessary for Monsieur le Comte de Chambord to take this course than any one else.

"What, in fact, makes this liberal course incumbent upon him, is that it will be taken by the House of Orleans if he does not take it; this is, by tradition and necessity, the course of the latter, and beyond all doubt constitutes its chief force.

"So long as the elder branch will not play this part, it is left to the younger one, and the fusion of the two becomes impossible, for the position of unique representative of Constitutional liberty is too high and too strong for the House of Orleans ever to give it up as long as it is left to occupy it alone. For my part, I would not venture to urge it to do so, if consulted. It is only by becoming frankly liberal that the elder branch can deprive the younger of the instinct which the latter maintains of holding aloof, and can furnish it with an honourable and practicable rallying-ground."

M. de Tocqueville, who was writing for his friends, took care to add in their name and his own—

"As for me, I am inclined to believe that, after the anarchy following 1848, and when we escape from the despotism we are now suffering under, it will be necessary to employ the greatest prudence in the re-establishment of constitutional Monarchy, and that the Royal power must first be assured of all the rights compatible with liberty, and that liberty, at the outset, must be given only those indispensable rights without which it cannot exist.

"Thus, to explain my meaning by two examples. A Parliament where the debates are free and public appears to me a condition *sine quâ non* of constitutional Monarchy; but it does not necessarily follow that Parliament should not at first be very restrained in its attributes and restricted in the duration of its sessions.

"Liberty of the press, again, seems to be one of the necessary conditions of constitutional Monarchy; but it does not follow that, beyond the preliminary censure, there cannot and should not be all kinds of guarantees against the abuse of this dreaded liberty.

"I repeat that M. le Comte de Chambord is not asked to pledge himself to re-establish the above-mentioned liberties in the state wherein the Monarchy of July left them, but to guarantee that these liberties shall be re-established in the measure which is indispensable for the constitutional system to be a reality and not a semblance." *

Another question, much less essential, yet beyond any other full of serious consequences, the question of the flag, had to be settled. It arose out of the force of events, and imposed itself without any possibility of eluding it on the day after the 24th of February, 1848. From that day M. Berryer felt that the reconciliation of the Royal family was a duty

* This note, sent to the Count de Chambord in 1852, was published in the *Gazette de France*, Nov. 23rd, 1871.

and of imperative interest; and hence it was that the question of the flag was treated in the numerous parleys he held with MM. Guizot, Molé, and Salvandy.

The Count de Chambord was informed of this, and the answer made in his name was that the Prince did not at all reject the emblem of a reconciliation which was also in his heart, but that they must not expect him to come to a resolve on that head before France invited him to it. The Dauphine still lived, and the argument was: "Is it possible, without the gravest motives, to wave under the eyes of the daughter of Louis XVI. a flag which would recall such painful memories?"

All politicians, without exception, to whom this reply was communicated showed themselves respectfully affected. It remained, thenceforward, implicitly and even explicitly agreed that as no one at this period had a mission to speak in the name of the country, nothing more should be asked of the Prince than he was willing to admit; in other words, there was an adjournment by mutual consent of the flag question until practical means had been arranged for restoring the Monarchy.

Every time the Duc de Lévis came to Paris he made a point of repeating, "The Prince has no fixed ideas as regards the flag, and does not wish to have any. He leaves that decision to the French themselves, but whether he is ever to return into France or die in exile, can he be asked to be enshrouded on

foreign soil in the folds of the banner under which he was banished? Moreover, the Prince gives you by his conduct a certain indication of his thoughts. He never wears uniform even at the Court of Vienna. He will never wear one unless in France. If he wore uniform, his hat would have to carry a cockade, and if he wore the white cockade even once, he would not lay it aside. His hat will carry the colours of the first French regiment which salutes him on French soil."

This language, spoken as an engagement and so understood, was corroborated by a chance incident, which many have heard, like myself, from the lips of M. Berryer. Count Fernand de la Ferronays, attached to the Count de Chambord's household, professed cordial gratitude for M. Berryer, who had taken an important part in his alliance with Mdselle. Gibert. One morning M. Berryer went to M. de la Ferronays, who had come to Paris for a few days. On leaving his young friend, who was staying in furnished lodgings, M. Berryer, thinking to open the door on the landing, opened by mistake that of a closet which had the same appearance, and saw a lieutenant-general's uniform hanging up, and a hat with a tri-colour cockade. Laughingly closing the wardrobe door, M. de la Ferronays did not conceal from his visitor that the coat was for the Count de Chambord in anticipation of his entry into Paris. The uniform had been ordered by Count Casimir de la Roche-Aymon, M. de la Ferronays' brother-in-

law, at Staub's, the fashionable tailor's, and the hat had been supplied by a hatter also very famous at that time, whose name I forget, but his shop, I remember, was at the corner of the Rues Caumartin and Neuve-des-Mathurins.*

If, at this date, the Count de Chambord had made some spontaneous movement towards his cousins, or had given utterance to some happy remark, after the style of Henri IV., and if the Duchesse d'Orléans, restoring their liberty to her brothers-in-law, had in her maternal love been endowed with fewer illusions and more perspicacity, the cause of the Monarchy would easily have been won. But as divisions continued in the bosom of the royal family, so they did in the Assembly. No doubt the Monarchy gained what the Republic lost—but which monarchy? This question made every one to whom it was put hesitate not a little.

A striking example of this paralysis through distrust was seen during the last vacation of the Assembly. The Permanent Committee had been warned, rightly or wrongly, that an attempt at violence was in preparation against many of the members, and that the wary M. Dupin himself was seriously threatened. The Committee was therefore authorised to deliberate on

* Strangely enough, when Marshal MacMahon was elected President of the Republic in 1873, the preparations for the entry of the Count de Chambord were again so confidently made that the horses and carriage for him were hired and ready to go to meet him at the railway station in Paris.—Translator's Note.

the means of lawful defence, and it did deliberate on them. But when it came to the means of execution, Legitimists and Orleanists could only agree on the negatives, and prolonged a passive situation, the inevitable sequel of which might have been very clearly foreseen.

General Changarnier had left and meant to leave on no occasion any doubt about his aversion for the Empire, but, in all other respects, he did his best to merit the nickname of "The Sphinx." General Bedeau was more openly a Legitimist, but on the 24th of February he lost that fame which subjugates and attracts the masses. General de la Moricière, detached from the Republic, not without difficulty, by the excesses which it always lets loose upon France, would have willingly accepted Orleanism as a natural stepping-stone. He was too clear-sighted not to perceive the perilous insufficiency of this half-way rest, and too loyal not to admit this; but his rich and ardent character had not yet attained its prime. His early errors had been dissipated, but his great progress was not yet accomplished.

These men and what they represented, whether in the Assembly or in the country, grouped likes fences on the same ground, flattered themselves that they were barring the road to the Empire, but when they were asked to take a further step they were perturbed, they shillyshallied, and they contributed to maintain public opinion in an inert state.

We incessantly told them so, we worried them and

pestered them with urgent advice. Many times, to speak of myself, I repeated to M. Thiers: "Your influence over Changarnier is well known. It is said—the expression is Louis Veuillot's—that you are busy in forging a sword. But who is going to hold it by the handle? Your hand is not soldierly enough for that. By your own admission Cæsarism is imminent. Have you, then, resigned yourself to this, and do you rely merely on the passing of an order of the day to conjure away that future which you declare fatal? Do you not fear that history, taking up your remark, "The Empire is made!" will add, "And M. Thiers wished it so?" M. Thiers did not deny the force of this, but employed all the resources of his inexhaustible wit to prolong his indecision and that of others.

One evening, in his drawing-room, he drew me into a window recess to treat anew this subject, of which he never shunned the discussion. I endeavoured to demonstrate that time pressed. He stubbornly replied that I showed myself too impatient. Fatigued with standing, we sat down on an isolated lounge, and being comfortable there we multiplied our arguments and drove them home, neither of us yielding an inch. The colloquy had commenced about ten o'clock, and when fairly tired out, myself more especially, we looked up, the room, full when we began our argument, was empty.

Madame Dosne and Madame Thiers had retired. The candles were all but burnt out; it was two o'clock in the morning. Such is the evidence I can adduce

as to M. Thiers' patience in these discussions, and to the fervent convictions by which I was animated. It is not in this way that ideas to which no great value is attached are discussed, and I never left M. Thiers without being persuaded that he was more tied by his pledges than by his own arguments.

Whatever his great mind really felt at bottom, when M. Thiers accused me of being too much impassioned, I replied that we were all alike pressed by the necessity of facing a solution which would brook no delay.

This was the revision of the Constitution, almost universally solicited, an imperious and closely impending question, upon which the General Councils at one end of the scale, and the populations, with petitions in hand, at the other, were entering upon with ardour. This fact was not to be denied; so no one tried to deny it, but there were attempts to parry it, and this became the occasion of a fresh division between the diverse fractions of the Conservative party.

Would they demand the revision of the Constitution? In what measure would they do so? It was impossible to stand united upon this ground, as had been done heretofore, in a common effort to maintain order in the streets and respect for legality at the Elysée, with other questions left to stand over. An important step became compulsory. Members were bound to speak out and vote plainly for or against a change in the Constitution; they must either cordially unite or fall apart.

Numerous efforts were made to prevent this division before it broke out in Parliament, and spread its ravages over the whole surface of the country. These negotiations completely failed. MM. Thiers, de Rémusat, Duvergier de Hauranne, their friends and their newspaper organs spoke against the revision, and in favour of the maintenance of the Republic. They drew General Changarnier away with them, and easily rallied General de la Moricière to them.

Another scission occurred in another important group of the majority. Messrs. de Broglie, de Montalembert, Daru, Beugnot, &c., stood out for the revision, but they did not understand by that that there must be a reversion to royalty. They believed in the possibility and the necessity of creating yet another intermediate state between the Republic and the Monarchy. They proposed to make the President then in office legally re-eligible by making the term ten years in lieu of four. In their view this would certainly make the Empire abortive by giving Prince Louis Bonaparte as compensation a decennial re-election, which universal suffrage would assuredly not refuse him.

The Left of the Assembly did not show more unity than the Right. The extreme Left, which always aimed at anarchy, naturally believed it was on the eve of plunging the country into it. There are some men of very even temperament, and they are always ill-humoured; so too there are parties which show great uniformity of conduct, and they always side

with whomsoever can hold social order in check. Thus it was that the same violent declamations were heard on all the seats of the extreme Left, but as rumour went the secret thoughts were very different. It was beyond doubt that, in principle, they were equally opposed to the majority and to the President; but if they were compelled to choose would they *in petto* prefer the majority with the whole Conservative programme and Monarchy at the end, or a Bonaparte with his revolutionary affinities, Italian sympathies, antagonism to the Papal throne, and his spirit of absolutism, which was also that of the Extreme Left?

M. Michel (de Bourges) passed for the chief of the secret allies of Bonapartism. General Cavaignac and Colonel Charras were the faithful leaders of the resistance to any modification of a Constitution which they unaffectedly admired.

We said to them: "Your fidelity and your good faith can no longer save the Republic. It has been ruined by its own fits of fury, as you yourselves predicted in the Tribune. If you shut yourselves up in an obstinacy more honourable than politic you will entail the worst misfortunes on your country, and yet will not save the idea dear to you. Representative Monarchy can alone, in France, guarantee what you seek in the Republic—liberty. Sacrifice the form to save the substance, or else you will lose both."

Addressing the Orleanists we repeated: "How can you delude yourselves into believing you could enthral

the country by your Republican conversion of so flimsy an appearance and fresh a date? No party has manifested more terror and reprobation of the Republic. Your real thoughts are, therefore, sought for behind your words, and you get the credit for tactics and imprudence. The former are believed to consist in gaining time for a plot not yet ready, and the other is in staking the security of the country on a calculation which has so many chances of being wrong. The Comte de Chambord is thirty, the Comte de Paris but twelve; if the Monarchy should be soon re-established, the elder has not only his principle on his side but the advantage of the fact. He is of an age and has the strength needed by France for a good government. The Comte de Paris' accession would imply a regency. Between the man and the boy at variance France hesitates; but if they can be united and the boy made the heir of the man all difficulties cease. Royalty will rest on a magnificent royal family. No one person will be sacrificed to another. The Comte de Paris will succeed the Comte de Chambord according to the law of nature and at the time when he would have succeeded his father, the Duc d'Orléans.

"You tell us that you would willingly consent, but that the country will not do so. The country wishes it more than you do, and if you were firmly to desire it, and give the reasons for it openly and frankly, the movement would be irresistible. Do you not see the symptoms of it everywhere, in all the

departments, in Paris itself, at the theatres, on the Bourse, and in all the great industrial centres?

"You say that you wish, by exposing the country to a fresh test, to complete its enlightenment as to the inconveniences of the Republic; but you enlighten it merely on the impotence of the Monarchy. It will not attempt, either through you or others, the continuation of an experiment of which it is weary.

"The war of the peasants foretold every morning, this is a formidable contingency which you will not induce it to accept in the name of the Republic, with the Republicans as the sole safeguard. In proportion as it approaches the date fatally inscribed in a fragile Constitution, the country becomes agitated and alarmed, and calls for help, and if you refuse it, the country will ask it of others whom you know well, and who will not refuse it.

"As for us Royalists, we loyally lent ourselves to the trial of the Republic in 1848. We surmounted deep repugnance and well-founded alarms, because, by acting otherwise, we should have unchained civil war and heaped ruin upon ruin. But now, when facts tell quite another tale, when the Moderate Republic has only a few honourable but scarcely perceptible adherents, and when the anarchical 'Red' Republic alone bars the way to the Monarchy, to be Republicans, and in spite of the country, without any patriotic excuse, and only through calculation, resentment, or recklessness, we cannot be that, no more than you can.

"You are entering without dignity upon a campaign

without result. You will inevitably be overcome, without even the noble consolation which conscience always reserves for those who do their duty."

To M. de Montalembert and his friends I never ceased saying: "What! Do you, who do not desire the Empire and who would not enter into a compact with it—do you believe in the political contingency of a Napoleon?—you throw a ten year's sop to his greediness and fancy you have satiated it? The President has been in power two years, and you see what he has done already; and yet you do not see what he will do with the gift you are going to offer him.

"The substitution of the Monarchy for the Republic may entail violent conflicts of which you say you will not incur the responsibility. To begin with, these conflicts do not seem to us as likely as you suppose. On the contrary, everything betokens that the country, calm, laborious and industrious, feels an imperious craving for security, which nobody will venture to combat openly; but, admitting your hypothesis, and that the radical passions grouped around the Republican banner will risk one of those appeals to arms which have previously succeeded so badly for them, do you believe that they will not also risk it against you? Do you believe that they will humbly accept, with bowed head, a revision which will wrench from them all chance of grasping power for ten years? Assuredly not; and this dilemma will be set to you: either the Republic, which has still some few adherents, has no army, whereupon the argument you derive from that

army opposing the Monarchy is of no value; or else the Republic is more popular and better armed than we suppose, and then it will rise against you as well as against us.

"You also put your stake down in this terrible game, but yours is of no value. You are guilty of the rashness with which you reproach us, but your guilt lies in that you have nothing to gain by your rashness. If there must be peril, let it at least be dared for the complete and definite safety which closes the era of adventure, not for an arrangement which settles nothing, and which makes you the unwitting accomplices of men whose political theories and appetites you do not share."

The more I ponder over my recollections, the more clearly I call up these discussions, into which I imported so much ardour, so much conviction, and perhaps so much passion, but at all events the passion for my country, while the less do I understand the equally sincere blindness of the other side. The Duc de Broglie, and M. de Montalembert deserved, beyond any doubt, the homage I paid unto their disinterestedness, and they speedily gave me the poor satisfaction of expressing their regret. What then was the cause of so great an aberration in such large and honourable minds? I fancied that I could guess at it without ceasing to do them justice.

The Duc de Broglie was not yet quite resigned to regard the Comte de Paris merely as the heir to the Comte de Chambord. He, too, preferred to wait, but

at all events he wished first of all to place France in safety. He did not think this safety was to be secured by a second presidential term, and he sought for it in a transitory system.

M. de Montalembert remained true to the motto so profoundly graven on his heart, "Be a Catholic first of all!" In the interest of Catholicism he was averse from too close an alliance of the Church and the Throne. He retained a painful recollection of the lapses during the last years of the Restoration, and he looked back with satisfaction to his counter experiences under the July Monarchy and the Republic. His character, holding the least disguise in horror, did not easily believe in falsehood and hypocrisy. He was slow to see in the second Napoleon the same violence and duplicity as in the first. The doubts he may have conceived on this head were counterbalanced by the impression the President knew how to impart, not only of his moderation but of his inertia. M. de Montalembert did not place much faith in the hostility of the President's designs, and he believed still less in their power. He had been set at ease as regarded the Church, and this was the key to all his other acts. His religious train of ideas may have led him astray, but he was never influenced by any ambitious or personal ideas.

While all these matters were being discussed upon the most affectionate terms Louis Napoleon continued to show less and less consideration for the Assembly. He had asked it to pass the Law of May 31st, which, by the mere fact of taking some precautions for the

justification of domicile, irritated that portion of universal suffrage which, though not the most numerous, was the most readily agitated. A few weeks subsequently he asked the Assembly to revoke its decision, and did so by the intermediary of an unparliamentary Minister. It would naturally be surmised that a new step of the President on the road to a *coup d'état* would have made the majority take a parallel step in the road of union and resistance; but it was the reverse which happened.

M. Thiers and General Changarnier became more and more closely allied, and affected a bearing which aimed at being an impressive one. As General Changarnier's most faithful admirers are forced to admit, he carried to excess two forces which often make heroes, to wit, energy and faith in that energy. When he was dismissed, he was seen to be very much galled, but he did not show it. He remained convinced that he would command the army by the authority of his name quite as well as by official rank. He had a favourite axiom at this time, and he would say, speaking of himself in the third person, "When Changarnier lifts his finger you need feel no uneasiness." He did not place much faith either in the strategy of M. Thiers or in that of M. de Montalembert. He fancied he held events at his disposal, and what astounded him was that people did not put implicit faith in him as regards this.

The Princesse de Lieven lived in Prince de Talleyrand's former residence, at the corner of the Rue de

Rivoli and the Rue St. Florentin. Members often called there, either on their way to the Palais Bourbon or on returning home. How many times have I heard the General tell us there in the freedom of conversation, "You are all looking for political salvation where it is not to be found." He would not add a word more, but his raised head, sparkling eyes and sly smile expressed very clearly what he meant. I am convinced that he was not deceiving anybody at the time. His muteness, very often affected, did not mask a plot but concealed a dream. Changarnier put too much faith in fame, old memories, and the ties of brothers-in-arms. He would have made only the noblest use of his dictatorship, but he believed obstinately in that dictatorship.

Driven to the wall, M. Thiers finally chose a course, and, once his mind was made up, he displayed all his ingenious and prodigious activity in getting it accepted, or in forcing it upon those about him. When we found him suddenly patronising that Republic for which he had not hitherto had imprecations enough, a fresh feeling for him inspired us. "M. Thiers," we reasoned, "is more susceptible of attachment and fidelity than we ever believed. At this moment he is making the greatest sacrifice for the House of Orleans in his power." Was this impression of ours wholly a deception? I have many times asked myself whether it was when I saw M. Thiers between 1871 and 1873. His stubborn clinging to office, his unjustifiable concessions to maintain himself there, and his childish delight

in the privileges accorded him as the head of the executive, made me eye the past with some suspicion.

In 1851, did M. Thiers really believe in the Prince de Joinville's holding the Presidency, as he affected to say, though he did not work to bring it about? Was he truly sorry at the objections springing up around him on the subject? Was he even a stranger to the representations made to the Prince, that it beseemed neither his own dignity nor that of his race to compete for the inheritance of Prince Louis Napoleon? Was not M. Thiers reserving to himself, when these objections should have prevailed, a claim on the Orleanist party, and the reversion to the post refused by the Prince de Joinville? Was he not inclined to look with pleasure upon this quasi-royal position, for a moment held and so keenly enjoyed twenty years later? I do not know, and it may be that he did not himself know any better at that date. The most marvellous sagacity does not shield a man from the illusions of self-conceit, and he who is rarely deceived about others is often deceived about himself.

In any case, whatever may have been the more or less conscious aims of M. Thiers, he gave us, during all that period of the revision, the spectacle of the most friendly speech, covering the most aggressive and impassioned action. He founded and managed newspapers, not merely to attack any idea of revision, which he had a perfect right to do, but to paint in the most forbidding colours all who differed from his opinions. He did not content himself with forming

the anti-revisionists into a body and urging them on, but he sowed broadcast in the ranks of the Right, the germs of the division.

Malevolence is the first impulse of foolish people. Those who have not much wit and who try to be clever easily become dangerous. They assume an air of profundity as soon as they have got hold of a false idea, and they cannot be induced to let go their hold. M. Thiers knew there were such men in all parties; he sought out such of them as were to be found in ours, and succeeded in catching them.

The extreme Right was not numerically strong either in the Assembly or outside. The Vicomte de Saint-Priest was rather deficient in his means of action, so he took MM. Nettement and de Laboulie to reinforce them. Alfred Nettement was a writer of genuine talent; to him was confided the management of a newspaper, started under the title of *L'Opinion Publique*, which openly drew its inspirations, and it was added, though I was never able to verify the statement, part of its funds from M. Thiers. M. de Laboulie had all the gifts and nearly all the defects of the southern temperament. He was easily excited, he was a fluent orator, but he was very prone to being jealous of superiority. Having taken a dislike to M. Berryer, he told me one day, "Berryer is a war-horse, who can still paw the ground, but you must not ask him to charge."

One member of the extreme Right, who enjoyed much notable influence over the Assembly, owing to

his fortune, family connections, and the gravity of his character, M. de X——, although habitually silent, showed downright skill in making people believe there was a meaning in what he did not say, and often did not think. I am inclined to think Célimène must have been acquainted with him when she said to Timanthe—

"And even when he says good day! 'tis breathed i' th' ear."

It was nevertheless a mistake to overlook his underground action. One day he wrecked the candidature of M. Molé at a private gathering of members, though he never opened his mouth in the discussion, by one of those tacit agreements with M. Thiers to which the extreme Right were becoming used. That same evening chance brought it about that I was president at the club in the Rue de Rivoli, where there was much commotion over the check so gratuitously inflicted on one of the men to whom the monarchical cause owed most. Seeing M. de X—— enter after the meeting had begun, and go to an unobtrusive seat amongst his private friends as usual, I endeavoured to draw from him an explanation of his conduct towards M. Molé, and I asked him for it after a short preamble on the gravity of the occurrence. He hummed and hawed, finally eluding me, and the efforts united to mine to get anything out of him were equally fruitless. Early next day the Duke de Lévis called on me, and at once explained why he had paid me such an early visit by saying—

"I am told that you were rather sharp upon M. de X—— last evening. Allow me to tell you that I am somewhat pained by this."

"Undeceive yourself, M. le Duc; I did not take upon myself to apply any censure to M. de X——, but I must confess I did worse; I put questions to him."

The Duke, not being fond himself of this style of conversation, dropped the subject, and went on to other topics.

About the same date M. Berryer pointed out M. Thiers to me one day in the Assembly, as he was talking very fast and confidentially in a corner to one of our colleagues; and he, who out of generosity of heart and a habitual loftiness of mind, disdained epigrams, could not resist observing to me—

"My friend, when you see a man of as much intellect as M. Thiers taking such pains to keep on pleasant terms with persons so far from calculated to further his course, you may be sure there is some evil design under it all, and be on your guard."

In truth the work of moles always ends by being visible on the surface, and from day to day we were enabled to notice fresh tokens of the fight which was preparing for us. From day to day, too, we found that we were the target for attacks and even insults, more or less disguised.

In addition, many of the Right refused to vote on the revision question, being uncertain as to the real feelings of the Count de Chambord and awaiting his advice to shape their course. My return from Venice

removed all doubts. M. de Saint-Priest murmured, but he ceased all opposition, at least openly. M. Nettement, who had not met in the tribune with such success as he had on the press, attributed the failure to M. Berryer, and his old antipathy, born in the office of the *Gazette de France*, no longer had any curb.

M. Berryer and his friends had no time to lose therefore, and as soon as I got to Paris the Rue de Rivoli Club set to and threshed out the revision question. It was consequently decided that several evenings in the early part of July should be exclusively and formally confined to this discussion. To begin with, I was questioned about my journey to Venice. I set out in all frankness the political aspect of my interviews with the Prince, the keen impression which I had derived, and his formal adhesion to the proposition of revision, not hesitating to call upon the Duc de Lévis to corroborate me, because the Count de Chambord had authorised me at Venice to do so, and the Duke had authorised me in Paris to do the same. M. Berryer next set forth the question from the parliamentary point of view, but he was obliged to absent himself, having a case on in the courts, although MM. de Laboulie and Nettement claimed to speak in reply. In consequence, I received from him next day the following note:—

"My good Friend,

"I am leaving, and I rely upon you to carry an unanimous resolution this evening. Do not fail to put strongly before the meeting the disastrous effect of a vote which would be

common to the Mountain and the Legitimists, and show how the fusion is destroyed by the refusal of the revision. Manage so as to come over to Augerville on Monday. Do not fail; come on Monday, and you will receive, as my guest, all the cares of a vigilant and careful friendship.

"BERRYER."

MM. Nettement and de Laboulie played their parts to perfection. They asserted that they were better situated in France to judge as to what the King's interests were than the King himself in exile, and declared that this was a case for showing a respectful opposition. I kept the promise which I had given M. Berryer, and undertook to answer both dissentients at the same time. In this reply I remarked to M. de Laboulie, who was a great whist player—

"You prophesy that we shall fail; it is possible. But is that a reason why the country should not hear the language of truth? or is it a reason why we should not, as you say at your favourite game, force our adversary?"

At a distance of thirty years, the remembrance of this evening often returns to me. Nowadays, those who have remained faithful to the moderate Right are incessantly reproached for having failed in the passive obedience due to the King's least orders. We are blamed also for not having had the courage to put forward the question of royalty at all risks and perils. In 1851 it was the extreme Right which boasted of the independence of its conscience and judgment as regarded the King, but it receded before the dilemma,

Monarchy or Republic, and this through an antipathy for fusion and an attraction for that pessimistic policy by the aid of which the ultras had already destroyed the Restoration.

M. de Laboulie's talent, more brilliant than M. Nettement's, was applauded, and I myself readily joined in this applause, but the views of these two gentlemen did not win over a single adherent, or at least it did not appear to do so.

The unity restored among us by the last evening's meeting in the Rue de Rivoli could not but strike our Orleanist colleagues; it might modify many of their feelings, and bring about a "death-bed reconciliation" between the two branches of the Royal house on the eve of so solemn a deliberation. Many of us went to rest and slept in hope of this, but they awoke in the morning with a totally different impression. Indeed, the newspapers published the list of the orators who had sent in their names to speak in the debate set for Monday the 14th of July; and among those opposing the revision figured the names of four members of the extreme Right and of the Rue de Rivoli club, all known friends of M. de Saint-Priest.

He himself did not figure among them, and there was room to suppose that some of his friends had put their names down without his knowledge or against his will. I was quite exhausted by the debate, and I asked a new favour of M. de Rességuier, namely, that he would go on my behalf to M. de Saint-Priest and

obtain a clear reply. The reply was equivocal and consequently unsatisfactory, a late but certain token that the Count de Chambord desired the fusion less than some of his friends, and that personally he did not care for it. Thereupon I wrote to M. de Saint-Priest:—

"July 10th, 1851.

"Monsieur le Vicomte and Right Honourable Colleague,

"The answer from you brought me by M. de Rességuier causes me so painful an impression that I believe it my duty to speak plainly. This evening's deliberation could have no other aim than a final effort to conjure away an undoubted misfortune, that of the advertised "split" in the Legitimist party. This division having been made as public as possible by the care which some of our friends have shown in editing *L'Opinion Publique* for the last week in a line radically opposed to the sense of the Rue de Rivoli meetings and to the previous tone of the *Opinion* itself; while by putting down the names of four members to speak against their own club I no longer see how we can flatter ourselves to prevent or repair anything since your co-operation is refused us.

"As for the final vote of the small number of our friends—which, I believe, will not much exceed that of the speakers already down in the list—I do not see that we need attach any importance to that. I never have troubled about a dozen votes more or less on the question of the revision, and have only been anxious about the attitude of the Legitimist party with the eyes of France fastened upon it. After the speech of M. Berryer or mine, the voting 'Aye' of our colleagues who put themselves down to speak in opposition could have but one meaning, namely, 'These gentlemen have caused us an agreeable surprise; they are at bottom less Bonapartist than we feared. Now that they have given us pledges, we can give them our vote.' I am ready, my dear and most honoured colleague, to receive this slap on one cheek, but I really do not feel any interest or duty in asking for it.

"I shall therefore endeavour to satisfy my conscience when

I get up to speak, without expecting to convince many of my hearers, and I shall then go and offer up in seclusion the entreaties which I can address now only to God.

"I pray you to believe, my very dear colleague, in the deep sorrow with which I sign myself

"Your most personally and respectfully devoted,

"FALLOUX."

I received the annexed reply :—

"Friday, July 11th.

"MY DEAR FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE,

"I trust you will let me give you the former title. Your letter would give me pain, too, if I did not think that there is a mistake somewhere. Certainly if it were in my power to bring about a union among our friends, as seems to me less dubious than you suppose, and I could do it without deserting my own beliefs, I should fail in my duty if I did not devote all my efforts in that direction. But are things so? I have not concealed from you any of my impressions. If my uneasiness has diminished, it has not vanished, and I am not convinced that to vote the revision will not be a fault. In this state of mind, and without the light which the debate may bring me, it will not be possible for me conscientiously to vote the revision, but I shall not vote in a sense counter to that of my friends, and I shall probably abstain. Thinking thus, can I employ my efforts towards what I deem dangerous, and, in a word, speak against my convictions? You are too conscientious yourself to ask me to do it, or to wish that I should.

"What I should have liked, as I have already told some of my colleagues who have thought most over the question, is that this discussion had not been raised last Friday, and that it should not be continued this evening, if it can be so managed. No fresh facts having come out since the early discussions in the Rue de Rivoli, why recommence these irritating debates, and why not let each of us reserve his vote until the debate in the Chamber and the incidents which may ensue enable everybody to understand the real situation and the probable results of the decision which may be arrived at?

"I shall not allude to the polemics in the papers about our friends putting down their names. I was away and not consulted. Having much respect for all my friends, I do not like to blame

them even when I may believe they were wrong in the choice of means. As to the allusion of yours to the more or less Bonapartist sentiments which we may attribute to one another, allow me to entirely repel this supposition, applied to characters too elevated to furnish the least ground for crediting it. No, thank God! We may differ as to the line of march, but not as to the goal.

"I hasten, then, to answer your letter, dear friend and colleague; we will have a talk over matters whenever you like. A thousand friendly wishes.

"SAINT-PRIEST D'ALMAZAN."

Irritating discussion was not what was dreaded in the Rue de Rivoli, for unanimity reigned there, and the four members, who had not been content to abstain, as M. de Saint-Priest announced, but who wished, by an ostentatious parade of their names in opposition, to make it appear that they were far more numerous than they were in reality, took good care not to announce their design. The surprise which I experienced was shared by all the members of the club without exception, who were not in the confidence of the plotters.

M. Nettement's newspaper, too, did not fail to give M. de Saint-Priest the credit for it, as he was its supreme arbiter. Therefore this correspondence marks an important date in the history of our party in 1851; it was the first sod cut of a grave which, from that day forward, was excavated and widened until it became impassable; it was the Wiesbaden circular trying to take its revenge against the Venice letter to M. Berryer; it was the first step in the war of what was seemingly good, but really quite the reverse; it

was a bold effort to induce the Count de Chambord to drive two policies abreast, to organise, like his ancestor Louis XV., *Le secret du Roi*, to dissimulate the two policies as much as possible, to make the one disavow the other when circumstances *imperiously* required it, and, more habitually, to sacrifice the policy of open daylight to that of the closet.

CHAPTER III.

THE SECOND OF DECEMBER.

1851.

After a long and solemn debate on the revision of the Constitution, which came to nothing, and only served to further the cause of Prince Louis Napoleon and set up a good deal of agitation, the Assembly, as the usual season for the vacation was near, did not oppose a prorogation which, if it did not bring repose, at all events varied the nature of our labours. So there was an adjournment to the 4th of November with a Permanent Committee, the majority of which was animated by feelings of mistrust.

The President was not slow to turn our absence to profit, for, abruptly and without any preliminary consultation with the Cabinet, he laid on the Council table a brief measure for abrogating the Law of the 31st of May. He did not the least mind his change of attitude being blamed, nor being reminded that the law was of his own initiation. M. Baroche was more concerned about this, for it was he who had suggested the timeliness and even the urgency of modifying universal suffrage by strict conditions as

to proof of residence. It was he who was now compelled to uphold the diametrically opposite theory in the tribune. This responsibility alarmed him, and was still more repugnant to M. Léon Faucher, who often committed errors of judgment but was of unquestionable loyalty.

They both showed surprise and deep irritation, particularly M. Faucher, when the President, with his habitual calmness, suggested a pure and simple return to universal suffrage without control or limit. The Cabinet at once understood that the Prince was unmasking a battery held in reserve for ulterior purposes, and that his resolve could not be shaken. Their resignation was offered and accepted with equal alacrity. Louis Napoleon saw that, in the parliamentary sphere, he would not obtain more condescension than that to be had from M. Baroche and his colleagues. So he gave up the idea of a Cabinet framed out of any fraction of the House for the accomplishment of his premeditated designs and boldly entered on a path not extra-legal but extra-parliamentary.

Once his mind thoroughly made up on this score it could not have been signified in clearer terms. Not only was the Cabinet of the 26th of October, 1851, chosen outside of Parliament, but no attempt was made to pay the Assembly the compliment of selecting a man of talent or fame. M. de Thorigny received the portfolio of the Interior; M. Daviel, on the refusal of M. Corbin, ex-deputy under Louis-Philippe, that of Justice; the Marquis Turgot that of

Foreign Affairs; M. Fortoul replaced M. de Chasseloup at the Marine; M. Blondel was called to the Finances; M. de Casabianca to Commerce; while M. Giraud, member of the Institute, a distinguished "Universitarian," and by this double title less thoroughly unknown than his colleagues, took the Ministry of Public Instruction, and passed at first for the preponderating person in this singular combination. But the true representative of the Elysée was not this gentleman. The confidant henceforth initiated into the President's projects was General de Saint-Arnaud, to whom was given the Ministry of War, after several pressing messages had been sent to him in Algeria.

It is difficult to convey an idea of the impression produced on the Assembly at its first interview with the new Ministry. The Ministers of the Interior and of Justice, in other words, the heads of the two most important departments, verged on the ridiculous; M. de Thorigny owing to the emphasis of his speech and bearing, and M. Daviel from the awkwardness and vulgarity of his carriage and all his movements. More than once M. Giraud followed them almost to the steps of the tribune ostensibly to support them or to prompt them, indulging in smiles and gestures towards the House as much as to say, "Be indulgent, they will be licked into shape by and by!" Murmurs and sarcasms accompanied these unhappy speakers all the way back to the Ministers' bench. M. Giraud would then flit from place to place protesting as to

the Cabinet's good intentions. One day he ran up against M. de Vatimesnil, who spoke out in his loud and boisterously good-humoured way, "Good intentions, monsieur, good intentions! that may be, but what we want is ability!"

Such scenes were renewed at every sitting. Yet the provocation was carried still further. The pretext for dismissing the Baroche Ministry was the abrogation of the 31st of May Law. But the President could have parted with a Ministry resisting him on a special question without for that reason changing the Prefect of Police, who did not appertain to the Assembly, and had no sides to take on that question. Yet M. Carlier, a very intelligent and resolute man, invested with the full trust of the Conservatives, was pressed to retire to make room for a successor as little anticipated and as little reassuring as the Thorigny-Saint-Arnaud Cabinet, namely M. de Maupas.

He came from the Toulouse Prefecture, where he had displayed so much zeal that men who desired to remain impartial tried to doubt the tales whispered about. His sudden call to the post of Prefect of Police caused these stories to be more narrowly examined, and one fact came out as certain. M. de Maupas had asked the Avocat-Général in the absence of the Procureur-Général to the Bench of Toulouse, for warrants of arrest against several members of the General Council. That functionary asked, before taking any action, for some preliminary proofs.

"Proofs!" replied the Prefect, "proofs! This shows how lukewarm or hostile magistrates can prevent justice being done. Proofs are superfluous when notorious enemies are concerned—their sentiments are quite proof enough!"

This theory being peremptorily rejected by the Avocat-Général, M. de Maupas waited for the return of the Procureur-Général, who upheld his subordinate, saying, "Such warrants cannot be signed without some, at least, of the papers being shown which would authorise them."

"You shall not want for papers!" responded M. de Maupas, driven to an extremity; "my men shall 'plant' them in the houses of the parties accused!"

The stupified Procureur-Général went in alarm to the chief judge, who showed himself none the less resolute to adhere to his duty. A report of the two interviews was drawn up and forwarded to the Keeper of the Seals, and it was while this occurrence was being reported to the Elysée that M. de Maupas was appointed Prefect of the Police.

The chief judge was the honourable M. Piou, brother-in-law of M. Odilon Barrot, who records this grave fact in his *Mémoires*, but he allows himself to be swayed by the personal feelings which so often stood in his way in political life and affect more than one passage of his *Mémoires*. He only mentions his brother-in-law, and omits the names of the Procureur and Avocat-Général, although they were the magistrates who showed the more meritorious firmness, for their career was at the mercy of the executive, while

M. Piou, who could not be moved from office, was free to follow the impulses of his conscience.

These two men, who were so faithful to their duty, were the Procureur-Général, Dufresne, and the Avocat-Général, Daguilhon-Pujol.

The choice of M. de Maupas for the Préfecture of Police betokened a resolution to have recourse to all kinds of expedients and to bare force. At the same time it let officials see that they need not be afraid of compromising themselves, as they would be upheld and rewarded at any cost.

The scheme for abrogating the Law of the 31st of May was a direct thrust at M. Thiers, who had thrown himself with ardour into the discussion on that law, and had given utterance on that occasion to his eloquent apostrophe of "the vile multitude."

M. Thiers saw through this manœuvre. He showed that he was very much irritated, but he was not disconcerted. He persistently believed that when he should adopt the Republic and stand out as its personification the country would rally to it. He flattered himself that he was the true mirror of France, the true reflection of its opinions, and the best representative of its interests. He imagined that his ascendency and prestige were superior to those of a Napoleon, and that Prince Louis was elected in 1848 only because he had willed it so, and would not be elected in 1852 because he no longer willed it. There was only one question about which he was dubious, viz. whether the candidature should be that of the Prince de Joinville or of M. Thiers? On that point reflection was still required, but he

thought this could be considered at leisure and without regard to the President, whose career would be irrevocably over by the end of the constitutional term.

I beg the reader to believe that I am not indulging in mere supposition, or exaggerating in any way. I am merely summing up in a few words the many conversations I heard for four months.

One of M. Thiers' most incurable illusions at that period was to imagine that he could replace by votes from the Left those of the Right which he daily alienated. This would have been to the real interest of the Left, but their passion dictated a different course. Among parties as among men passion overpowers interest more often than might be imagined. It blinds people, and when it does not do that it carries them away. The Left counted in its ranks many confederates of the Elysée, but even those whom corruption could not ensnare had a tacit affinity with the Bonapartes. If a choice had to be made between the latter and the ancient royal race, they had made it already in their inmost hearts.

Napoleon founded the natural dynasty of the Revolution. When the Revolution finds that it must defend itself against its own excesses or powerful foes, it has recourse to a Napoleon. A strong power is only distasteful to Revolutionists when it is in the hands of their traditional adversaries. A power which encourages them and flatters them by its origin is never very displeasing to them.

The Bourbons—the elder branch in the superlative

degree, the younger in a lesser one, but sufficiently so to keep up the rupture—represent the French or the British monarchy. Both are fully compatible with sincere freedom, as history proves. But sincere freedom is distasteful to Revolutionists. Their one aim is an abasement of all superioritics, the abolition of all hierarchies, in a word, equality in its lowest and most levelling sense.

The Napoleons have, in their eyes, the great advantage of not excluding the Jacobins. The ground lost by the Elysée in Parliament and on the legal ground was regained, with not a little to boot, by occult ways and by dazzling the eyes of new adherents with promises which were not all false. We had a proof of this in Italy a little later.

As for M. Berryer and his friends they could not dissemble their defeat, but I believe I may assert that they showed themselves loyal if vanquished foes. On the very day after the vote on the revision we said to M. Thiers and his clients, among whom must be included General Changarnier, "You wanted a second test of the Republic and you have got it; the constitutional majority has pronounced that we were wrong; may events not show that we were right. Meanwhile you may regard us as the unchanging allies of legality in a struggle which we have been anxious to spare the country by a legal and complete return to the true conditions of order. More than you we dread a fatal issue, but, as much as you, we shall try to ward it off."

During the four months' life left to the Assembly

the Elysée had no more steadfast adversaries than M. Berryer and his friends.

Now we shall see these various efforts at work.

On the 4th of November, the day of the reassembling of Parliament, M. de Thorigny came with a message from the President, closing with the request, very ambiguously worded, for the abrogation of the 31st of May Law. The Ministry also demanded that urgency should be declared for this abrogation.* This was supported by MM. Michel (de Bourges), Jules Favre, and Emile de Girardin, whom the Left applauded. M. Berryer got into the tribune amid indescribable uproar. Even he, though generally listened to with so much attention, had great difficulty in making these few words heard—

"The resignation of the Cabinet, unforeseen, complete, spontaneous, the circular of the new Minister of War, on reading which everybody has been surprised to find no reference to the authority of the law and respect for institutions [*"Hear, hear!" from the Right; agitation on the Left*] all these circumstances have raised a feeling of uneasiness, which can only be allayed by firm assurances of absolute security."

In consequence M. Berryer moved for the formation of a committee to hear the new Ministers, and make a report on the general situation.

* Note of the Translator.—The French Parliamentary phrase of "urgency" means that when the majority votes in favour of its being applied to a measure that measure is passed without going through more than one reading.

This motion neither characterised nor prejudged anything; yet it was rejected, not because it was not clear enough, but because it was too clear. For an instant it seemed as if General Saint-Arnaud had triumphed all along the line. But the situation was soon reversed. The Government demanded urgency for its measure of abrogation, and this was rejected. The bill had to go through the ordinary channel of being referred to a Committee, reported upon, and read three times.

The Committee, in obedience to the expression of public feeling, hastened its pace, and on the 11th of November M. Daru, its chairman, read from the tribune a report recommending the rejection of the bill. The debate was fixed for the 13th. M. de Thorigny and M. Daviel described the Daru report as disdainful and provocative. M. Michel (de Bourges) spoke against it no less strongly in the name of the Left. M. de Vatimesnil, as reporter on the municipal bill, which had been a long time under examination, supported the conclusions of the Committee. He urged that the municipal bill should be put upon the orders of the day, and showed that this bill would enable all the questions relating to the residence of the elector, which formed the basis of the difficulty to be discussed, in their proper place, without offence to any one, and without conflict between the executive and legislative powers. This, however, was not what the Elysée wanted, and the discussion of the measure was hurried on. By the small majority of 355 against

348, the Assembly decided that the bill should not be read a second time. This was barely a defeat for the Government. It was beaten in a skirmish, but the Conservative army was melting away visibly, and on the very ground where it was best posted to obtain a victory. The check was scarcely felt at the Elysée, where the prompt dissolution of a majority reduced to seven votes was of course discounted. Men who ardently pursue an end do not mind wounds which leave a hope of revenge behind them.

The commotion following this vote had not calmed down when other incidents arose to give it fresh fuel, and the army was manifestly being "worked" by General de Saint-Arnaud. Regiments were systematically brought up to the capital or removed to a distance according to their readiness to utter the cry of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" Men competent to judge such matters did not conceal their alarm. They noticed representatives of the Elysée busy in mysterious conversations or conclaves. M. de Persigny had asked for an appointment with General Changarnier, and had opened the dialogue by expressing surprise at the poorness of his rooms, which, as far as I remember, were in the basement of a house in the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré. "So great a personage as you ought not to be set in so small a frame," said M. de Persigny. "It is because the frame is so small that the person appears great," retorted the General. M. de Persigny tried to carry his overtures further, but was promptly stopped and shown to the door. Not

holding any official post, M. de Persigny was allotted the hazardous rôles suited to his character. He had invented a kind of private diplomacy, and by the excess of his frankness he baffled the inquisitive. Passing one day in front of a group of the Right who were in animated conversation, he stopped and said, with his apparent calmness, "So, gentlemen, you are plotting against the President?" "Not at all," replied one of the party, "we were only wondering on what day we should book our places in the diligence for our return home." "You would do better to book your places in the Senate," retorted M. de Persigny, as he went quietly on his way.

Such sayings reassured more than they alarmed people, who thought that if the danger were serious such boasting would not be indulged in.

Nevertheless, General de Saint-Arnaud, though reserved in demeanour, daily inspired more and more umbrage, and some of the leaders of the alarmed majority deemed it urgent to have the right of the Assembly to protect its members sanctioned by a formal enactment. It was thought that the quæstorship would have a special authority on this subject, and the three quæstors, General Le Flô, M. Baze, and M. de Panat, brought forward on the 6th of November a motion thus couched:—

"That the Assembly orders to be promulgated as a law, inserted in the orders for the army, and posted up in the barracks, Article 6 of the Decree of May the 11th, 1848, in the terms hereinafter stated, to wit:

"The President of the National Assembly is charged with the duty of watching over the internal and external safety of the Assembly. To this effect he shall have the right to requisition the armed forces and all the authorities whose assistance he may deem necessary. His requisition may be directly addressed to all officers, commanders, and functionaries, who are bound to obey immediately, under the penalties laid down by the law."

This motion, read by M. Baze, caused a keen emotion on all the benches of the House. The Mountain exhibited downright fury and shouted, "Previous question! You are violating the Constitution!" After ten minutes of indescribable confusion the quæstors' proposition was referred to the Committees. The Committee appointed to examine it did not foreshadow a certain majority. Some of its members did not repel the proposition in principle, but considered it untimely, and that organ of indecision, the *Journal des Débats*, said, "There is no hurry; when the danger comes there will be time enough to guard against it." Perhaps it would have been wiser to say, "When it comes there will be no guarding against it."

The Minister of War was called before the Committee. His replies, out of which it was hoped to infer much, augmented the uneasiness. First he refused the explanations which the Committee had a right to demand of him; then he contradicted himself by alleging as facts what, on examination being made, was not found to be correct. At each interview his

resistance increased, and at the end of the debates, which were very animated, the Committee, by 30 to 27, adopted the quæstors' proposal, and selected to prepare their report M. Vitet, one of the members most openly opposed to the President. This selection was the last act of the old majority.

On the 11th of November, a Monday, amid the utmost anxiety without as within the House, the discussion began.

It was a long and stormy one, but the Left were cajoled into voting with the partisans of the Elysée, and the bill was rejected by a majority of 408 to 300.

From that hour the struggle was ended. The Republicans immolated themselves whilst declaring the Republic to be imperishable. In his *Mémoires* M. Odilon Barrot says, "The victim was disarmed, and there was nothing more to be done but strike home." He adds, "As soon as the vote was known at the Elysée they took courage. The orders were changed. Louis Napoleon, who had been keeping his numerous guests waiting, said to them with a gracious smile, 'Now, gentlemen, we can sit down to table.'"

The four hundred and eight voices which allowed the President to sit down to dinner so gaily were composed of all the Left, with the exception of Colonel Charras and a very small knot of his friends; of all the Elyséens, with the exception of M. de Morny, who had hurriedly quitted the House with the Minister of War; lastly, of a considerable portion of the Pyramids Club, the principal leaders of which were much divided

in opinion. The three hundred votes in favour of the proposition had been given by MM. Berryer, Thiers, Molé, General Changarnier, and all the Right.

When Père Lacordaire was discussing with Madame Swetchine and myself the appositeness of his resignation on the day after May the 15th he said, "Republican anarchy will inevitably bring about Monarchical competition; thence politics will enter upon a phase where I neither have nor wish to have admission."

Père Lacordaire's anticipation was now realised, and it seemed to me that the clergy in 1851 ought to have professed the feeling felt in advance by Père Lacordaire in 1848. The clergy would willingly have done so, and by a very large majority, but it was under the sway of a newspaper, or rather of a man who never ceased to lead it astray in the most opposite directions. For that occasion the *Univers* was Elyséen, and as its editor, M. Louis Veuillot, never took up any question by halves, he attacked the Assembly without truce or mercy.

When I returned from Nice in the spring of 1851 I did not think it advisable or in good taste to voluntarily prolong the quarrel which had broken out between M. Veuillot and myself on the subject of the Education Law. I went to see him, and said with a shake of the hand, "Be sure that you will never find the shadow of any rancour on my part." "I quite believe it," drily replied M. Veuillot, and he continued the conversation in so haughty a tone that I soon withdrew without regretting my step, but little dis-

posed to repeat it. He never returned my visit, and we remained on this footing up to the commencement of November.

In the course of that month, only a few days before the vote on the quæstors' motion, I met M. Eugène Veuillot on the stairs of the house where I resided in the Rue du Bac. He accosted me, a thing he had never done before, and told me that his brother, very uneasy at the turn affairs were taking, desired an interview with me. This time it was M. Louis Veuillot who made advances to me, but I was not yet cured of my credulity. I may as well own to it at once, for the opportunity is a good one for doing so. I have always been inclined to give my confidence and have been prone to illusions. My simplicity was over sixty years old when it died, and I am sorry that I survived it. So my answer was, "Most willingly. Kindly ask your brother to come and breakfast with me next Sunday. We shall both be more free on that day."

M. Louis Veuillot was punctual to the appointment, and as soon as the meal was over we broached our subject.

"You have gone too far," I said to him, "for me to ask you to revert to the policy which I prefer; but I entreat you at least to be less fiery and absolute in your own."

As I then believed the *Univers* to be more devoted to the Church than enrolled in the Elysée plots I added: "I know the President better than you do. Never expect from him a truly Catholic policy. Do

not deceive yourself with regard to the Roman expedition. The President made it against Austria, and not for the Papacy. As to the temporal power, he cherishes the traditions of his family and the feelings of his youth. When you have freed him from all curbs and have only him alone to deal with, you will see whither he will lead you. Do not, therefore, pave the way for great remorse to your conscience and a great humiliation for your political sagacity. The least you can do is to remain neutral."

"Do you believe in the success of your opposition?" gently inquired M. Veuillot.

"No; we are too greatly divided to be powerful. In all probability neither you nor we can stem the flowing current. Between a Parliament and an executive power, it is not easy to meet force with force; but we can avoid paving the way for and applauding that which we dread. Do not, therefore, engage your responsibility in such an unknown pass; maintain free of all entanglement, for the more or less proximate future, the Catholics whom you represent. The coming Emperor will play the despot too inconsiderately not to soon bring about an inevitable reaction. Do not you get yourself crushed in that machinery, but save your dignity for to-morrow by your independence of to-day."

Like a man who is sincerely seeking for advice, M. Veuillot questioned me more than he talked himself, encouraging me by his attentive bearing to give him unreservedly the details of the intestine divisions

which paralysed our majority and were likely to dissolve it in a brief space. Finally, after two hours' chat, M. Veuillot rose and said, as he held out his hand—

"I leave you to go and write an article of neutrality."

M. de Rességuier, fully informed on the situation, came in at this moment, and I said to him in a satisfied tone, "We have obtained neutrality."

Next morning, full of the same confidence, we opened together the number of the *Univers*. What was our stupefaction when we read in a leader my ingenuous communications of the day before turned to account and refuted in the bitterest terms. The weak points of the majority were brought out into full relief, and the Elysée was more encouraged than ever.

The President doubtless read the *Univers* with pleasure and profit, for one of M. Veuillot's phrases appeared soon after in one of his proclamations.

I do not understand M. Veuillot's coming to me on the 16th of November if he meant to write as he did on the 17th and 18th. If he wanted to bring about and to glorify the *coup d'état*, why did he feign to accept my reasons in favour of neutrality? If he wished by that feint to obtain from me confidential information as to the projects of the majority, what name would M. Veuillot give to his proceedings? I thought it superfluous to put these questions to him; I gave orders that I was not to be at home in case he

again presented himself, but he did not do so, and I never saw him again.

Nothing further was lacking in the preparations for the *coup d'état* but the choice of the day, and that could not be far distant.

Among men neither blind nor in the secret uneasiness increased. At the end of November, M. Molé assembled at dinner the Duc de Noailles, M. Berryer, General Changarnier, M. Vitet, and myself. As soon as the doors were closed, we pressed General Changarnier with questions as to the probable chances of attack and defence. Never had the General's impression of security been greater. He still believed himself to be the representative and inviolable commander of the army. Irritated at our incredulity in this respect, he soon was goaded into unfolding the plan to us on which rested his hopes.

According to him, the President could only reckon for a *coup de main* upon a petty number of obscure and ignoble agents; not one would he find among Changarnier's brethren-in-arms, so that there would be little resistance, and a few precautions would suffice. "My rooms are a little fortress," added the General. "My fellow-lodgers are wholly devoted to me, particularly the pastrycook who has the ground-floor, and all his scullions."* On hearing one so valiant

* Victor Hugo, in his *Histoire d'un Crime*, too fanciful in many places, asserts that Changarnier had discharged on the 9th of September the fifteen men, armed to the teeth, who had guarded him at night. These guards were pure invention on Hugo's part.

and usually so sharp and penetrating speak in this way, we could not help feeling very grieved, and finally we did not attempt to answer him. We separated in silence and in consternation, each one saying to himself, as we acknowledged subsequently to one another, "The country now belongs to the most cunning and the most audacious."

The 2nd of December, anniversary of the battle of Austerlitz, was chosen for the execution of the *coup d'état.* M. Thiers, arrested in his bed, showed the same surprise as on the 24th of February. General Le Flô, at the Palais Bourbon, saw his room invaded by Colonel Espinasse, an old brother officer, to whom, the rumour goes, he had confidentially shown the secret staircase by which the colonel came up. The general had expected to get away by it to a guardroom and to the esplanade of the Invalides, where a regiment was in barracks. General Changarnier and General de la Moricière, probably the two men most dreaded, were so suddenly and deftly taken in their sleep that they could not even stretch out a hand to the pistols placed within their reach. General Bedeau alone made a fight for it in the street, and denounced by his shouts the assault of which he was the victim. He was forcibly carried into the hackney carriage at the door, and it was rapidly driven away. Things were much the same everywhere else, as "the unseen sentinel" nowhere appeared. Few of the members of the Left did anything in earnest. Baudin alone, one of the Mountain, met death on the barri-

cade which he sought for and braved with true heroism.

These facts belong to the domain of history, and are painful from the point of view of the national honour to all, of no matter what opinion. So I confine myself to picturing here the little corner of the panorama to which I can give the precision of personal testimony.

My faithful Marquet, arousing me earlier than usual, informed me with no little emotion of what had happened in the night, and of the tenor of the placards already covering the dead walls of Paris. I got up at once, and was still dressing when many of my neighbours of the Faubourg St. Germain came in to my rooms. The Duc de Luynes was the first, followed closely by M. de Vatimesnil, M. de Kerdrel, and some others. Our resolution, firmly settled in advance, was not to imitate the frightened rout of the Jacobins on the eighteenth of Brumaire. But where could we set up resistance, and what rallying point could we select for it?

The very small number of deputies, M. de Rességuier among them, who had succeeded in getting early into the Palais Bourbon, were surrounded there by soldiery, and it was no longer possible for us to go and join them there. M. de Dampierre came to tell us that there was a gathering at M. Odilon Barrot's, and we were starting for it, when one of our friends, not belonging to the Assembly, M. de Miramon, informed us of a meeting of representatives nearer us, in the

Rue de Lille, at Count Daru's. We hurried off there and arrived at the same time as M. Odilon Barrot and his friends, who did not want to be separated by the Seine from our objective point, the Palais Bourbon. M. Daru belonged to the Pyramids Club, the group of members who had fancied they could ward off the usurpation by a regular and parliamentary compromise with the President. This plan had been rendered abortive by the rejection of the motion for revision, and the *coup d'état* threw down a challenge to them. It was taken up spiritedly by M. Daru, the Duc de Broglie, and some of their colleagues. No one was more resolute than they in the protest. They were injured in their honour and dignity by their apparent complacency of the previous day.

Quick to acknowledge their mistake, they were bent on not letting their sincerity be suspected. Our numbers already reached about a hundred, when Augustin Cochin, deputy mayor of one of the arrondissements of Paris, sent to tell us, through his brother-in-law, Count Benoist d'Azy, that the mayor had retired, but that he himself, faithful to his post, called us there, together with our colleague, M. de Lauriston, commanding the National Guard of that ward. A district mayoralty might properly become the legal centre of lawful resistance, and we instantly proceeded thither. Our strength grew every minute; in the absence of M. Dupin, said to be a prisoner, the Assembly was regularly constituted under the presidency of the first of its vice-presidents, M. Benoist d'Azy. During a

deliberation of three or four hours, no one showed any hesitation, and still less any falling away. M. Berryer was the soul, the inspirer, and draughter of all the measures taken. He knew how to put an end, by a few words or merely a look or a gesture, to any discordant motions or useless ones, and to bring back and concentrate all wills upon the sole point.

The deposition had just been carried by about 300 votes, when we perceived troops massing under our windows. Almost instantly our stairway was invaded, and an officer accompanied by a few soldiers set foot in our hall. M. Vitet, one of the vice-presidents, and several members spoke to him in the name of the law and of military loyalty with such imposing dignity that the officer, visibly affected, retired after a short hesitation, followed by the men he commanded. Other orders and reinforcements were needed to arrest us. General Oudinot and our two vice-presidents were laid violent hands upon, and we were all made to go down into the yard and file out into the Rue de Grenelle as far as the Quai d'Orsay Barracks, between two rows of soldiers and under the eyes of a cowed or jeering crowd.

I had left the Rue du Bac about 8 a.m., without breakfast, and with no money or clothes for such a journey as that to which we appeared condemned. Most of my colleagues had not been more foresighted than I, and we had sound reasons to laud the hospitality of the Lancers regiment which, while carrying out its military duties according to its lights, welcomed

us at the Quai d'Orsay with affectionate sympathy. We were turned loose in the barracks yard like a flock into a pasture, and we put this kind of liberty to profit by proceeding to call over the list of names, to which proceeding we all attached the same value. As night came on and the fog thickened, we were made to go pell-mell into a vast hall. An officer, an Angevin fellow-countryman, M. de Jourdan, recognised me and offered me his quarters. When this kindness had put me in possession of a comfortable room, I asked to be allowed to share the favour with some friends, particularly M. de Rességuier. M. Berryer joined us there, and knew no more than we did of the treatment in store for us. The officers of the regiment were also quite in the dark on the point. Towards midnight, a Commissaire of Police and his men came to order us down into the yard, saying that we were to go away in carriages, but without making any reply to our questions. In our uncertainty about our destination, M. de Rességuier and I kept arm-in-arm, in order to make as sure as possible that we shared the same fate. The mention of "carriages," very politely made by the police officers, made us suppose that we were going to be scattered about in the Paris prisons. Our surprise was, therefore, rather unpleasant on perceiving not honest hackney-coaches but prison vans. At the sight of them I said to M. de Rességuier, who has since reminded me of it, "Upon my word, I shall never treat on familiar terms with Morny again." We were both made to mount into the malefactors' coach, but were

locked up in opposite and separate compartments. If I had to give an account of our state of mind here, I should say that few of us apprehended that we were going to be called to martyrdom, and were in nowise thinking of earning it. We easily inferred from the want of order in and the tardiness of the measures taken that our collective resistance had not been reckoned upon, that no more would be done than was strictly necessary, and that we should have no dangers to incur after the first few days save that of being allured from our duty. Thus I did not fear for either M. de Rességuier or myself, and we concluded, when we got calmer, that M. de Morny, rarely caught tripping in matters of taste, could not have treated his colleagues otherwise than as criminals without falling below the mark of his new master's style.

Our van was composed of four compartments, two on each side, separated by a passage in which were two men in uniform. No light reached the cells from without or from the passage, though a small aperture in the roof let in a little air and a glimmer of light. There was a wooden seat and a very little room for the legs, which were of necessity bent up. When installed in this cell, an operation which did not take long, I rapped on the panel in front and raised my voice to ask, "Who is my neighbour?" "General Oudinot," was the answer. M. de Rességuier put the same question on his side and received the reply, "General de Lauriston." This at least allowed us to congratulate ourselves on being in good company;

and we relapsed into silence, as the warders in the passage warned us that a regular conversation would not be allowed. After five or six minutes' drive at a fast trot, a vivid light shot through the grating and the thunderous roll on the pavement ceased. We guessed that we were going up the Grande Allée of the Champs Elysées. At the end of about half an hour our team fell into a walk. "Where can we be climbing to?" we wondered. Then came a stoppage, and after a little parleying our little prison-houses were opened and we were told to alight, whereupon we found we were in the Fort of Mont-Valérien.

A few officers, with some infantry soldiers, received us, excusing themselves for having to offer us only a dormitory in sad disorder. "We did not expect you," they repeated to each of us with great politeness. "We can readily believe that," we replied laughingly, for good humour had returned to all of us on seeing that our excursion was not a long one, and that there would be some four-and-twenty of our colleagues collected in the same place. It was a large barrack-hall, furnished with the couches of soldiers who had been marched out post-haste to reinforce the garrison of Paris.

From the end of this vast dormitory we enjoyed a magnificent view over the Seine valley and the great city, distinguishable through the obscurity of night by its gas lamps. I went up to the large glazed embrasure through which the sight could be contemplated. Two of the Left had preceded me into this

observatory. Too intent to notice me, they were saying to each other in a tone of regret, "This is strange! there are no fires—not one yet!" The threat of a great conflagration had often been intimated in the demagogic newspapers, but we had never believed that it could be made in earnest. But to-night we could see that it was the expectation even among Republicans who passed for moderate.

I went away without revealing what I had overheard to stretch myself on my couch and carefully wrap myself up in a military-hooded cloak lent me by M. de Jourdan when we were quitting the Quai d'Orsay barracks. M. Nettement's organ, the *Opinion Publique*, had displayed much warmth against the Elysée, and had published a serial in which all kinds of malevolent anecdotes against Napoleon figured. Amongst others was quoted this jingle—

"He said to me, my hand to borrow,
With kindness to bewitch:
'My friend, you'll something have to-morrow,'
Next day I had—the itch!"

"Par une faveur sans égale,
Il me dit en serrant ma main:
'Mon ami, vous aurez quelque chose demain!'
Le lendemain j'avais—la gale."

The recollection of this perturbed us not a little. However, silence gradually crept over the dormitory, and all ended by falling into a profound sleep.

We were still asleep when we were awakened by a kind of apparition. It was the venerable Vicomtesse Dambray, who by dint of persistency had

obtained permission to go to M. Dambray wherever he was and take him some necessary articles of toilette. She went from couch to couch, excusing herself with great politeness to some and retiring in some confusion from those who, aroused abruptly, sprang up very suddenly. I believe, for that matter, that her search at Mont-Valérien was without success, as M. Dambray had been taken to Mazas or Vincennes.

Next day we received the visit of the Duchesse de Luynes. Her first husband was the Vicomte Jules de Contades, and thus she had the acquaintance of a young brother-officer of his, M. Magnan, since marshal of France, and at that time the general commanding the army of Paris. She applied to him for a pass. The first husband's memory was destined to protect the second, though General Magnan could only introduce the duchess into the palace, the President having reserved to himself the monopoly of passes. She went there with her son and the pass was obtained. On stepping into their carriage they perceived M. Leverrier also entering the Elysée, and young Contades pointed him out to his mother, saying, "That's the great astronomer, whom nobody can surpass in the discovery of new stars!" The Duchesse de Luynes brought our companion in captivity two pâtés de foie gras and a newspaper containing a letter from our colleague M. Molé, whose absence had astonished us. Living on the outskirts of the Faubourg Saint Honoré, and tardily informed

of what was occurring at the district hall of the 10th arrondissement, he had vainly attempted to join us, and he nobly claimed his share in our protest. This letter was read aloud and was warmly applauded.

The lovely Duchesse de Luynes, with the graciousness which she infused into everything, undertook a quantity of errands. Among the Republicans who eagerly flocked around her M. Antony Thouret was conspicuous. Like M. de Lally-Tollendal, he might have been nicknamed "the fattest of feeling men." It is he whom an illustrated paper pictured in 1848 as coming forth from the dungeons of Louis Philippe beaming with health and good-nature, and crying out, "How I have suffered!"

With the pathetic tone which he too often assumed he urged Madame de Luynes to take charge of a host of letters. "Kindly set my family at ease about me," he said to her, "but let them well understand that I am inconsolable at once having held the fate of France in my hand and yet let it escape me!" "Is that true?" we all called out; "you held the fate of France in your hands! We never knew that!"

But it was our memory which was at fault, for M. Thouret was right. He had, in fact, at the time of the *Constituante* moved an amendment declaring ineligible the members of families which had reigned in France, and, consequently, the Bonapartes. Prince Louis got up to speak against it, but he expressed himself in such awkward terms and with so strong a

foreign accent that the House interrupted him with noisy roars of laughter. M. Thouret spoke immediately afterwards, and thinking that a smart saying would suffice, merely remarked, "After what the Assembly has just heard, and what all France will read to-morrow, my amendment becomes useless, and I withdraw it."

The insult was aggravated by the applause which followed, and the amendment fell through. From that day forward Prince Louis only rarely appeared at the Assembly. The 2nd of December was his repartee.

We were walking in the inner yard of the fort under the guard of numerous warders, when one of them, to my great surprise, brought me a note. I opened it, and my surprise was doubled on reading these two lines—

"Should you consent to see me again? I am waiting for you in the rooms of the gate-keeper.

"PERSIGNY."

I hesitated. Not that I cherished any grudge against M. de Persigny. He had never served but one party, doing so openly at his own risk and peril. So I asked the bearer of the note, after due reflection, to take me to M. de Persigny. He embraced me with great emotion, saying, "Will you ever forgive me for not having given you warning?"

"But, my poor friend," I said in perfect sincerity, "I should never have forgiven you if you had warned me. What could I have done upon

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receiving your warning, and how would it have affected my duty?"

"True, true," he returned. "Nevertheless, pray believe that you have caused me much anguish."

"Why so? You are returning me the visit I paid you in the Luxemburg prison, so we are quits for to-day. By-and-by we may play the rubber game."

"In the meanwhile, perhaps," he said in a melancholy tone, "I have another act of forgiveness to ask of you. I have not been able to obtain that you should be included among the large number of those who will be restored to liberty as soon as the petty riots in Paris are suppressed! Morny joined me in this, and the President would have willingly consented, but the Prefect of Police formally opposed us by singling you out as one of the members who had been most active against us this month."

"M. de Maupas does me an honour which I wish that I had better deserved. Do not trouble yourself about my health. Rest can only be favourable to it. Here, as at the Quai d'Orsay, I have found a good friend from my own part of France. I am lodged, with M. de Rességuier, in the room of an officer, M. Charlery, and we have to complain of nobody and nothing. I learn from you that the resistance of Paris still endures. You must have made a great sacrifice in leaving the battlefield, so pray hurry back to it. Let us cleave to our old friendship outside of the political strife. Try and give good advice to your Prince, for he often needs it; and since you venture

to take upon yourselves alone the salvation of France, at all events save her! I do not believe that salvation lies where you are going to look for it. If I am wrong I shall render you justice, do not doubt it, as all disinterested hearts will do."

Thereupon we exchanged a few more brief and serious observations before separating with an embrace. I returned to my exercise ground and my colleagues, to several of whom I confided this unexpected interview. We concluded that the resistance was ephemeral, and that we should soon receive our freedom as a sign of our defeat, thus moderating not a little our prayers for deliverance.

About two o'clock the morning but one after this I was aroused by two colleagues arriving from Paris; they were already entered on the list of future senators—M. de Heeckeren and the Duc de Mouchy. They came straight from the Elysée, which they had quitted at eleven o'clock. The object of their visit was to take me back with them; but they soon understood that I preferred my position to theirs, and they went away empty-handed as they had come.

One of my observations at Mont-Valérien agrees with what was related to me later of Mazas and Vincennes prisons, viz. how closely our habits are part of ourselves, and how little hold the gravest events have upon them. The *coup d'état* had surprised M. de Vatimesnil in the full flow of the debate on the municipal law, upon which he had to make a report. On leaving home he had taken nothing with

him save his papers for that debate; his report was in his overcoat pocket, and stuck out above his waistcoat like a shirt ruffle; the amendments puffed out his tail pockets. As soon as he was settled down in Fort Mont-Valérien he looked them all over and arranged them in proper order, as if the debate might be resumed at any moment. With his incontestable erudition as a legist, and his cordial and inexhaustible eloquence, he rallied the members of the Left on their coldness as regarded decentralisation.

M. Dufaure gave us quite the contrary spectacle. He had readily come to the meeting at the 10th arrondissement hall; but he appeared still to apprehend that he would injure himself by alliances too monarchical. Arriving with us at the Quai d'Orsay barracks, he obtained permission to return home to his wife, who was close on her confinement. As soon as a son was born to him, and all danger was over, he came again to be a prisoner with us, like a genuine Regulus. We saw him arrive in the yard, carrying a little parcel wrapped up in a check handkerchief under his arm. We surrounded him and warmly congratulated him. For an instant he lost his morose air, but he soon became taciturn again, and remained so to the termination of our detention.

M. Odilon Barrot clung imperturbably to his theoretical ruling thoughts and solemn gestures and expressions. While marching in double file from the Rue de Grenelle to the Quai d'Orsay he went in front, and I heard him communicate to his companion

—for we walked two and two—this axiom which assuredly none could deny as apropos: "I fear that this day representative institutions have received a deep wound!" At Vincennes, whither he was taken, he had M. Berryer and M. de Foblant almost as bed-fellows. "Well, Berryer," he said from his bed, "it will be set down that, after more than sixty years have elapsed since 1789, you and I were compelled again to see might triumph over right. Is it not downright humiliating?" "Hold your tongue, Barrot!" replied M. Berryer, turning round, being the very man who least understood and most sincerely disdained the art of striking an attitude for effect. Unintentionally both men pictured themselves true to life in that dialogue.

During our sojourn at Mont-Valérien, which lasted three days, we were able to receive communications from outside. We first received the newspapers by the ingenious intermediary of two of my kinsmen, Paul and Henry de Champagny. They had managed to get enlisted among the waiters of the neighbouring eating-house-keeper charged with the supply of our table, and came in among the carriers of the large baskets borne on their heads. When our meal was over they took out not only the empty baskets, but also our letters and our commissions. M. Pascal Duprat confided many messages for Republicans, which were most conscientiously carried to their address.

Under the same disguise, on the evening of the 2nd

of December, young Gaston de Beaucourt had penetrated the Quai d'Orsay barracks and done some service to the members confined there. (The Marquis de Beaucourt is the founder of the *Société Bibliographique* and editor of the *Revue des Questions Historiques*.)

At first, M. de Maupas had utterly lost his head, as may be gathered from M. de Morny's notes, which contain some piquant evidence to this effect. When an easy and complete victory had reassured his mind, our liberation met with no hindrance. There were a few exceptions due to personal animosities. However, this was enough to prevent us accepting our liberty as a privilege. Hence we declared to the police commissary that we would all be liberated or remain in prison, and we refused to give our names, so as not to favour the system of special lists. Not being able to overcome our refusal he went away; but ere long we saw M. Duponcheau, chief usher of the House, arrive with some of his auxiliaries, who knew us perfectly by sight. Our names were taken without our participation, and we were asked to step into omnibuses which had been waiting in the yard some hours. Nobody budged, and we declared that the omnibuses would have to go away empty. But the police agents having laid hands on the collars of several among us, I then thought that I might leave with M. de Rességuier and the Duc de Luynes in a carriage sent by the duchess for her husband. Thus I did not witness an incident afterwards related to me by several of my colleagues. They were taken to the

Place Louis XV. and there they were told to alight, but they renewed their protests in favour of the members still held prisoners, and declared that they would not leave the omnibuses unless by force and under restraint as they had entered them. The knot was cut by taking out the horses, so they had to get out and go home.

I had not been in my house half an hour, conversing with MM. Benoist d'Azy, des Rotours, de Chaulieu, and some other colleagues and friends, before the drawing-room door opened, and M. Dupin appeared with a broad smile on his face. We had been indignant at the conduct of our President, who had already been strongly suspected for some months, and we had agreed that the first of us who met him should insist upon a straightforward explanation with him. On seeing him I went up to him, and barring his way, said sharply—

"M. le President, come no farther. We are pledged that the first of us who meets you shall speak his mind to you. I am sorry that the duty falls on me. Be good enough to retire, or I shall carry out my pledge to the end."

Without paying the least heed to this reception, M. Dupin quietly advanced into the room and replied—

"Why, my dear colleagues, what else would you have had me do? *Novus rerum nascitur ordo.*"

"Ah! yes, M. Dupin—

'Le Latin, dans les mots, brave l'honnêteté.'"

[If you use Latin, you may the honest shame.]

He pretended not to hear, went up to the other members, who also refused to give him their hands, and taking an arm-chair in the chimney corner, which nobody offered him, he sat down as if he had been greeted very cordially. I was then standing up by the mantel-piece, with one arm on the marble and the other free to emphasise my words; and for nearly half an hour I discharged at him point blank, without his wincing, my artillery, unfolding the panorama of his defects. He muttered from time to time—

"Any one would have acted as I did!" Or else, "I never had such a thing said to me before!"

For the first time in his life, perhaps, M. Dupin had not a retort ready, not a sarcasm or a spark of wit. This tacit consent to execution indicated, I hope, more remorse than he chose to show; it was his last homage to the moral and political dignity of which he was taking final leave. At length ending my reproaches before he had got to the end of patience, I said to him—

"Monsieur Dupin, let us put an end to this sorry scene; leave the men whom you betrayed and return to those who are willing to pay you your reward! Without you we have got out of prison, and without you, God willing, we shall get quit of our divisions, and when the Monarchy rules we will take care to make you clearly aware of it."

"As you please," he said, getting up and going out as calmly as he had entered, to renew his adhesion to the *coup d'état.*

Soon afterwards M. Dupin was appointed Procureur-Général to the Cour de Cassation. When I presented myself to the Académie a few years later, M. Dupin was the only member to whom I did not pay the usual call. He voted against me, but our reciprocal hostility went no farther. We spoke many times on the same side on literary questions, neither of us avoided the other in the ancient hall opened by Cardinal de Richelieu, and we were invariably true to the purest traditions of courtesy.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ROYALIST PARTY AFTER THE COUP D'ÉTAT.

1851—1852.

THE *coup d'état* of the 2nd of December was sanctioned by six million votes, that is to say by the great majority of universal suffrage. At first sight this may seem amazing, but on reflection it is to be comprehended. Thus consulted, a nation judges by the instinct of the moment, not by principles and profound calculations. It is not composed of thirty millions of Pascals and Montesquieus, but is a mass of secondary prejudices and permanent interests. Instinct, prejudice and interest were sure to condemn us. Like all other things, representative government—and the Republic is ultra-representative—has its inherent drawbacks. Notably it risks public opinion taking men who know how to speak for men who know how to act, and the disappointment of public opinion speedily turns to anger.

M. de Lamartine led the Constituent Assembly astray from the very first. After him, General Cavaignac, skilful in oratorical effects, which were ap-

plauded all the more readily as coming from a soldier's lips, had more elevation in his language than breadth in his views, and he let the Assembly live, as he lived himself, from hand to mouth Consequently the Constitution was a monument of incapacity and lack of foresight. It might have been thought that its aim was to heap, clause by clause, imprudence upon contradictions. In this, however, the Assembly's only fault was that it did not show itself superior to its times. Born of a revolution, it did not believe itself destined to struggle against the principle of that same revolution. It limited itself simply to emerging from the revolutionary state. While letting the Conservative banner float a little at hazard in its hands, yet it never lowered it either to barricades or to the Utopias destructive of all social order. At first the country did not ask anything more. It willingly tried the Republic to avoid civil war, without consenting seriously to found this form of government in a durable manner.

The Legislative Assembly was born of a commencement of disenchantment and of a vague aspiration for a strong power. Had the Monarchical party shown itself resolute after showing itself united, the return to Monarchy was possible under the most normal conditions. If, in face of the divided Monarchical party, the Left had shown itself firm and compact in ideas of moderation, it would easily have made the country take patience, but it constantly showed itself weak before the extreme Left, and that party, under the

name of the Mountain, exhibited sheer folly. Its incessant insults to the President were calculated to rouse the passion of despotism in the heart least predisposed that way. By endeavouring to isolate the Prince from men who could not be taxed with complacency, he was driven into the arms of hirelings; by denouncing the violation of the Constitution in and out of season, he got to remark what little emotion the cry excited. The country never moved except to arrive at order. The Mountain manœuvred solely to bring about disturbances, and never could understand the difference between a revolution in progress and one accomplished—between 1789 and 1848.

In '89 events converged and tended towards destruction; in '48 all the revolutionary attempts were abortive and profited the opposite party. In 89 there was a goal which was too soon overshot, but the nation meant to attain it; in '48 all gravitated towards the pole of Conservatism and the enjoyment of acquired rights. It follows that no greater mistake could be committed than to confound two epochs so distant—the aspiration and the possession. Upon the exhaustion of the *ancien régime* all is fatal to royalty, virtues as well as enlightenment, the purest intentions as well as the most sincere devotion.

Among the aggressors of that *régime*, perversity, baseness, ferocious violence and infatuated ignorance carried all before them. The obstacles held to be insurmountable were surmounted; what was then reputed indispensable was suppressed or supplanted;

generals and administrators were improvised, and in one way or another managed to face all needs until a man of genius came upon the scene, absorbing everything and personifying everything in himself. In 1848, on the contrary, the two great rôles of fortune and fatality were reversed. The revolutionary masses were powerless; seduction and sedition came alike to nought. In the First Revolution some bands of *Sans-culottes* and Marseillais terrorised and overturned a society centuries old; the Revolution of 1848 agglomerated a formidable army in Paris under the name of "National Works," and when that army attacked Paris, deprived of the first element of defence, Paris resisted, and it was order which triumphed. In '89 the very Royal Guard went over to the mob; in '48 those children of riot, the *Gardes Mobiles*, became intrepid champions of the Conservative resistance. In '89 there was a rapid descent from the Constituent Assembly to the Convention; in '48 there was a pacific rise from the Constituent to the Legislative Assembly. In '48, it was not the popular classes which failed the political ones, but the latter which were untrue to themselves.

No longer able to promise anything farther to the nation which had issued from the '89 reforms, from Napoleon's Civil Code, and the liberties sanctioned and enlarged by the return of the House of Bourbon, men allowed themselves to be absorbed in reveries which would have disgusted Voltaire and outdone Rousseau's imagination. They undertook to regene-

rate all mankind and endow it with unheard-of faculties and perpetual youth. France could no longer be enticed by such a bait; she turned aloof and, what is more, jeered at it. The men of the Mountain did not pay any heed to this, but were stubborn in their blindness; their ruin, under one form or another, was decreed by the common sense of the public.

As for me, a resignation personally was easy. My political life had been short, but full. I had been able to uphold my creeds in the tribune, and serve them on some occasions. Hence I had no grounds to complain. Others, who were of more value than myself, had not known this delight. So feeling that the time for my final retirement had arrived, I gave myself up to no elegy on my fate, and cast back on the past only a grateful look. Besides, though I was in the prime of life, I was no longer in possession of health. I could not shake myself free of the capricious daintiness which is common to all nervous maladies, and can only be supported in isolation. And yet I was not reduced to feeling mere resignation. I had two rare consolations: a home full of charms, and a passion which had for a long time been but imperfectly satisfied—the love of my native district. Hardly had I got outside of Mont Valérien, than I gave notice to quit at my Rue du Bac lodgings, and went away to Anjou, telling my friends that, without bidding farewell to their friendship—far from that—I bade adieu for ever to our common life and action.

However, before enjoying my new existence, I had to settle a score with the Second of December, which I had not been able to foresee. The *Constitutionnel* journal, then strongly Elysian, edited by M. Granier de Cassagnac, stated, in its issue of the 4th or 5th of December, that on the evening preceding the *coup d'état*, M. de Heeckeren had called on the President, and announced to him in the narrator's presence that M. de Falloux wished for a *coup d'état*, and adhered to it in advance in the name of the Right. The President, who a few instants afterwards had to give orders for the night's work to the War Minister and the Prefect of Police, replied to Baron de Heeckeren with his ordinary unconcern—

"Come and see me again to-morrow, my dear baron, and we will talk the matter over."

Next day the whole of the Right were at Vincennes, Mazas, or Mont-Valérien, a plain fact which of itself contradicted M. de Cassagnac's story, and one with which I might have rested content. Moreover, the freedom of the press was rigorously suspended, and nothing whatever could be published without previous authorisation. Nevertheless, I sent a rectification to the Paris newspapers, in not one of which did it appear. I sent it thereupon to a Frankfort paper, printed in French, which hastened to reproduce it. I cannot find the original in my papers, but any one curious in the matter may recover it in the file of that journal. The truth was as follows.

In the Presidential Message presented on the 4th of

November to the Assembly by M. de Thorigny, the President said—

"Whenever the majority proposes to me energetic measures for saving the country, it may rely on my loyal and disinterested co-operation."

Such hints were incessantly being renewed in the lobbies of the House. The President's friends never ceased to reproach us for our lack of patriotism, and posed as men possessing marvellous secrets for the salvation of nations. One day I exhibited my annoyance at this to M. Giraud, calling upon him to show us the base of a policy so fraught with promises, and I added that our co-operation would not be wanting to measures having another character and probably bearing better fruit than the abrogation of the May Law. M. Giraud was not in a position to reply to this demand, and the colloquy was cut short. Similar conversations were ceaselessly renewed in our lobbies; that which I had with M. de Heeckeren in no degree differed from them. As has been seen, our relations were of long standing. A discouraged Legitimist, embittered by some proceedings of the Rue de Rivoli Club, he had withdrawn from it to enter the Rue des Pyramides Club.

He was one of the most assiduous frequenters of M. Thiers' residence in the Place Saint-Georges, where the host was pleased to chat with him upon foreign diplomacy, about which he was always well informed through his relative, a former ambassador to St. Petersburg. So I was thinking altogether about

M. Thiers, and not at all about the President, when at the end of November I conversed with M. de Heeckeren about the passage in the Presidential Message on the measures by the aid of which the dilemma of 1852 might be escaped. It struck me as being well thus to bring M. Thiers and the Orleanists to reflect upon the dangerous consequences to them of the line of conduct they had been for some months following.

To my great surprise—a surprise from which I have not yet recovered—M. de Heeckeren mistook my intentions, and instead of repeating my remarks to M. Thiers, thought to be agreeable to the Elysée by repeating it in a much exaggerated form there. It assuredly showed a defect in perspicacity quite counter to his habits to utter words about legality and constitutionality on that evening of the 1st of December, where they could not ring save as discordant notes. Hence he received a mildly ironical reply, which he no doubt did not fully understand until the morrow. M. de Heeckeren had blundered; and the *Constitutionnel* printed false news, and some other papers a slander about it. However, this could not injure me seriously, and, indeed, did not do so.

Another incident of the same nature was felt more keenly by me. In its issue of the 10th of December *La Bretagne* published a piece of information which was eagerly reprinted by the *Constitutionnel* of the 13th and the *Univers* of the next day. It was asserted on my own testimony that the Chambord Committee in

Paris had sent out instructions to its provincial correspondents not to vote against the President, and it was added: "This decision is one of the most honourable facts recorded in party history. In our eyes, it absolves the moderate Legitimist party of the faults it has latterly committed."

This was a translation, not merely exaggerated, but unfaithful to boot, of the deliberations and resolution of the Legitimist Committee. Hence I am bound to re-establish the truth here.

What really happened and was decided upon was quite a different matter.

As soon as my fellow members and myself recovered our liberty the committee of the Count de Chambord assembled at the Marquis de Pastoret's to deliberate on the course to be taken. On the 3rd of December the President had issued a decree, countersigned by M. de Morny as Minister of the Interior. The nation was suddenly called upon to meet at the polls in a short time to accept or reject the following plebiscitum :—

"The French people will the maintenance of the authority of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, and delegate to him the necessary powers for establishing a Constitution on the basis proposed by the proclamation of the 2nd of December."

These bases were among others—

Abolition of the *scrutins de liste* for elections to the Legislative Body and a Second Assembly, a preponderating power and guardian of the fundamental compact and of the public liberties.

The Count de Chambord's committee, therefore, had

to solve three questions as matters of urgency. Ought Legitimists to take part in the voting? If they do not abstain, ought they to vote yes or no.

No member of our committee was in favour of an affirmative vote. M. de Vatimesnil alone spoke in favour of a negative vote. M. de Saint-Priest, more explicitly even than M. Berryer, spoke in favour of abstention. Their opinions won over M. de Vatimesnil, and the vote to abstain was carried by unanimity. The same conclusion had been reached by two different ways. Some saw in abstention the means of baffling the Yeas, and some saw in it the means of baffling the Nays. So we were blamed by some for too much timidity and by others for too much hostility.

M. de Montalembert had been taken quite unawares by the Presidential usurpation, and, though he had not come to the 10th arrondissement hall like the Duc de Broglie, he had at least hastened to bear to the Elysée the open remonstrance of his loyalty. Our incarceration made him indignant, and he did not conceal his feelings from any one. As soon as he heard that I had returned from Mont Valérien, he hastened to my house with words full of effusive affection, and declared himself very satisfied when I imparted to him the resolution of our committee.

"You could not do more or less," he spontaneously said, "and farther cannot be asked of you."

But this was not the keynote of the *Constitutionnel* and the *Univers*, which made common cause together. They actively persisted in wringing from M. de Mon-

talembert himself a more energetic manifesto and, unfortunately, they obtained it. On the 12th of December he wrote a letter to the *Univers* which he has since openly and bitterly deplored.

"To vote against Louis Napoleon," he said, "is to acknowledge that the social revolution is right, that being the sole possible inheritor of the present government. To abstain is to belie all our antecedents and abdicate the whole mission of honest men at the very moment when this mission is the most urgent and fruitful. To vote for Louis Napoleon is not to approve all he has done, but to select between him and the total ruin of France."

For my part, I abstained from voting, not only as a matter of tactics but because this course was the faithful expression of what I felt in the depths of my conscience. I could not help acknowledging that France and the Bonapartists themselves had afforded the Monarchical party the faculty of reconstitution, and that it had not profited by it. At the same time, political experience had taught me that the Republicans, by their incurable medley of violence and weakness, were preparing only a sanguinary anarchy for our country. Not one earnest and benevolent reform could be found among their schemes, if they had any thought out, and not one genuine liberty was tolerated in their practical rule. I could not, consequently, be astonished or much irritated at the country passing the sponge over an audacious venture which held out a glimpse of order and duration. In what personally

concerned me, I was most resolved to applaud and sanction nothing, because in my heart I approved nothing of what had occurred; but I was equally resolved not to infuse bitterness into my blame or give it a bearing which would bring me into contact with demagogues, or even momentarily enrol me under their banner.

Moreover, I had preserved from my relations with the President the impression that he had much more wit but much less good sense than the public credited him with, that he was full of chimeras, even when he was trammelled by an Assembly and a Constitution; that he could not fail to become immeasurably venturesome as soon as he felt himself without curb or control: that the height of fortune would intoxicate him, not caution or enlighten him, precipitating him into faults from which France sorely needed preservation, if Heaven permitted.

On the point of this early intoxication I was completely deceived. It is true that he wrote on his desk a decree annexing Belgium after the Napoleonic manner, but the patriotic despair of M. Sauvo, editor of the *Moniteur*, sufficed to soften him and stop it. The decree was annulled on the same night which saw its birth, and Louis Napoleon was relatively cautious for five or six years. In the first and natural emotion following the 2nd of December, I never ceased saying to my friends—

"Do not separate yourselves from the country, which may not be long before it appeals to you

again. The victor of to-day bears in himself the seeds of three mortal complaints: despotism, war and prodigality. If one of them spares him, he will infallibly perish by another."

I was only half a prophet; the complaints which would, I thought, entail sudden death were but lingering ones.

At an interval of thirty years, I feel it necessary to *envisager* the illusions of that time to explain my hopes to others and myself. I believed that the advisers of the Duchesse d'Orléans had received the lesson they deserved when they opposed the reconciliation of the two branches of the Royal Family; I believed that the Legitimists, who had for the first time in many years enjoyed a free political life, would have cherished the fondness for it and profited by its teachings; I believed that the honest Republicans would learn from the new despotism the value of our principles and the price of liberty; lastly, I believed that France was one of the favourite instruments of Providence, and that we Royalists, the elder sons of the country, might conjure away supreme disaster by dint of good conduct, abnegation, or devotion! Such were my thoughts then—or rather my dreams—they were dreams, not infidelities! I had been too slow, and had too much repugnance to foresee the woes of my country; but, at least, never during one solitary minute of my life did I believe that a Frenchman could knowingly consent to the misfortune of France or voluntarily contribute to it!

I was beginning to forget all about the *Constitutionnel*, the *Univers*, and M. de Cassagnac, when I received the following letter from M. Berryer :—

"Tuesday, 30th December, 1851.

"My dear Friend,

"I am obliged to impart to you a fresh trouble more grave than that which was given us by M. de Montalembert.

"I sent to the Count de Chambord a full copy of the letter from M. de Grandville to M. de la Guibourgére, accompanied by no observation or reflection. You will see by the following letters that I had handed a prior copy to M. de Saint-Priest. In reply he sent me a letter for which I did not at all thank him, and the next day (the 24th) he himself brought me the second letter dated the evening before, accompanying it with some strong verbal protests. Nevertheless, an appointment was made at Nantes, and from this meeting issued annex No. 3.

"I propose to send all this to Prague. We must have a positive repudiation of these lying attacks, directed against men of the highest authority and devotion. But I do not care at present to make myself clear upon all these intrigues and this double policy until after communicating the tittle-tattle to you and having your opinion. Besides, I am fully convinced that Monseigneur disapproves and steadily condemns such evil practices and contemptible calumnies, only endangering the interest of his cause and the Monarchy.

Write to me as soon as you can. I have a sure and easy occasion for conveying all we may desire to say. A thousand friendly wishes!

"Berryer."

From the documents joined to this letter, it resulted that the Marquis de Coislin, a Breton of old and illustrious lineage, on his way to his country house at Carheil, had been arrested at Nantes for having spoken with friends on political events.

M. de Coislin was one of those friends of my childhood of whom I have previously spoken. He had

very grand manners, and a great deal of energy without much wit. He was one of the Count de Chambord's principal representatives in Brittany. On the 2nd of December he had found means to get to us in the 10th arrondissement hall. There I had handed him a copy of our decree for the deposition of the President, and he had gone and posted it up in Nantes, the only town, thanks to him, if I am not wrong, where this document received a semi-official publication.

This was the same Marquis de Coislin who, twenty years later, though advanced in years, took up arms, enrolled himself among the Zouaves, and showed his long white beard everywhere beside his young colonel, the valiant Charette. M. de Coislin, therefore, had every possible claim upon the sympathy of the Nantese Royalists. So they were greatly affected when they heard him make the most wounding speeches against M. Berryer, the Duc de Noailles, the Duc de Valmy, the Duc de Clermont-Tonnerre, and myself. He pretended to know from the Prince himself and the Duc de Lévis that the journey of MM. de Noailles and de Valmy, concerted with M. Berryer and me, had no other aim than to entrap the royal approval for the abrogation of the Presidential powers. These sayings, repeated to MM. de Grandville and de la Guibourgére, both deputies for the Loire-Inférieure and devoted friends of M. Berryer, caused them extreme irritation. They called a meeting with closed doors, composed of MM.

de Coislin, Hippolite de Cornulier, Charles de Kersabiec, Emerand de la Rochette, Alphonse du Fort, Patrice de Goulaine, Abbé de l'Epinay, Charles de la Salmonière, and de Grandville.

Before this jury of honour, M. de Coislin declared that he could not at that juncture furnish the proofs indispensable to explain what he had asserted, that there was an authority superior to himself, without the permission of which he must keep silence upon this question, which he could not accept in the terms in which it was put; that later, when he should be allowed to speak out all, it would be acknowledged that he had not wished to give to the debates the importance which all the meeting attached to it; and that, in any case it had never entered into his head to say anything to injure the political reputation of MM. Berryer and de Falloux, as he would prove.

M. de la Rochette maintained that this extenuation did not exist in the language previously held before him and which he had repeated. Whereupon a report was drawn up and signed by all the members of the meeting and addressed to M. Berryer, who sent me the duplicate.

I answered immediately to M. Berryer:—

"My Friend,

"Two things distinctly struck me on reading the documents you sent me: the interest of our honour and that of our cause. As far as the first is concerned I feel little affected; besides, it would promptly and easily obtain all the apparent satisfaction desirable. As for the second, the mischief seems greater to me, and, to tell you the truth, irremediable for the

time being. Adolphe de Coislin has been indiscreet and blundering, but he has been thoroughly veracious. His words teach me nothing at all about the mental disposition and superiority of judgment on which I have intentionally kept silence for several months. Denials can produce no impression on me.

"M. de Lévis, in a recent conversation which I had with him for two hours and a half in my house last August, allowed me clearly to discern, without perceiving it perhaps, sentiments which determined me no longer to continue the direct and personal relations with him with which I had up to that date been honoured. I felt the complete uselessness of them under certain aspects, and even their unsuitability under others.

"'We are not Royalists on the condition that the King should be always pleased and we always contented!' So said the Count de Maistre forty years ago, and so you have practised, my dear friend, with so much abnegation and lustre for two-and-twenty years. As for me, I have nothing better to do than take you for a model, and I own to you that costs me nothing.

"I had no need of intimate connection with the Duc de Lévis nor of making my counsel prevail in our conferences in order to remain what I was born and shall die—a pure-blooded Vendean.

"All who preceded me in that country gave their life with joy, without any hope of even receiving a glance from the King. I ask for no more, and my devotedness is not dashed for a minute by the thought that it will have to exert itself for and by itself without other motive than that of duty done and conscience satisfied.

"As for you, my friend, your position is very different. You have neither my broken health nor other of my motives; for twenty-two years you have been the outer life of our cause. You cannot in any way modify your duties or your situation.

"I do not allow myself to address you advice, but I do express an ardent desire. You have put all your courage into the combat up to now, when the combat is momentarily prohibited. Profit by the repose to impress on Monseigneur's mind some appreciation which he evidently lacks as to many points of view and as to many men.

"I do not think that you can conceal from the Ducs de Noailles and de Valmy how the Nantes affair affects them. No doubt they will join with you, not in exacting useless explanations, but in making indispensable truths very plain.

"The men who so strangely judge us are guilty only in respect to their intelligence; they have been enormously so for a year past; they continue to be so in the most dangerous manner still. When incapacity rises by its results to the proportions of treachery, too much tenderness for it becomes complicity.

"My dear friend, I keenly regret being so far from you and our two other friends, not for any help I could give you but for my own consolation. It is precisely because I do not abandon the hope of being of service hereafter that I want to recruit my strength during this truce."

Perhaps some readers will be astonished at the formal tone of this letter. If that is blamable, I must confess that it is very much so, as it was not the result of a sudden outburst but of long-standing and deep-seated feeling. Mingling with respect for the King a sentiment of paternal tenderness for the young prince, M. Berryer could not bring himself to sadden or even to go contrary to him. When away from him, he formed the sternest resolutions, in his presence they melted in an affection which often found vent in tears. By my own feelings I knew too well what such emotions were to impute them as a crime to M. Berryer, but I often supplicated him to be on his guard against them. He would always reply—

"Probably you are right. Yes, M. the Count de Chambord has scales over his eyes, but as soon as he touches the soil of the country they will fall, and you will see a brilliant reign."

This time I believed the hour had come for M. Berryer to strike a decisive blow, and if he did not feel the courage to deal it in his name, I wished at least that the Count de Chambord should put to his

credit that kindness which he deemed fit to withdraw from me. So, in a postscript, I formally besought M. Berryer to send my letter on to Prague. M. Berryer answered me:

"My Friend,—

"I have not written to you since the receipt of your letter, but I have not remained inactive. I hold ready two copies of your letter and of the Nantes report. I shall send them to Prague by a sure hand, but I am obliged to wait in order to be quite secure for the departure of M. de la Ferté, delayed from day to day. I have made MM. de Valmy and de Clermont-Tonnerre acquainted with the documents; but two appointments made with the Duc de Noailles fell through. I have not, as in duty bound, spoken to any person of these papers, but on Sunday last and yesterday, I assembled the conference, and, without reading the documents, I dwelt with vigour upon the double policy practised in Monseigneur's name and the impossibility of any longer remaining in such an equivocal position. The conversation did good and will be followed up by a note to Monseigneur, which in the name of us all will set observations before him which I did not like to present in only your name and my own.

"I have not seen M. de Saint-Priest again. He sent M. Sala, an ex-officer of the Royal Guard, to Prague on the day after I despatched the first letter from M. de Grandville by a traveller. Since that again, the Duc des Cars started for the same destination. These precautions thus taken made the co-operation more necessary to me of the conference, which by general observations will of necessity back up the special despatch of the document from Nantes. The Duc de Valmy is delighted at all this, as he sees thereby that there will have to be a thorough probing of things, and the evil will have to be struck at in its very roots. Henceforward you can write to these three gentlemen, as I shall have had the papers read to M. de Noailles before to-morrow is over.

"I will keep you informed of what is done. Believe in all my attachment,

"Berryer.

"Thursday, 8th January."

Free to write to the Ducs de Noailles and de Valmy, I hastened to do so. I did not keep any draft of these two letters, but I am sure that both repeated this first outcry of my conscience: "We have not to exculpate ourselves to a Prince who well knows what language we have held to him, but to demonstrate to him that there exist some incapacities in this world more fatal than treachery."

As for the committee meetings at M. de Pastoret's, they did not much concern me, and I never quitted Bourg d'Ire to take part in them. The persons with whom I had to deal were not susceptible of conversion because their perfect good faith maintained them in an invincible ignorance.

The Duc des Cars, living entirely outside the political world, properly so called, did not appreciate the man or the ideas in M. Berryer. Nothing could ever drive out of his head prejudices dating from 1832, and from the failure of his military plans under the eyes of the Duchesse de Berry.

M. de Saint-Priest, a diplomatist by nature and training, did not know Madame Swetchine's profound apothegm: "Distrust also has his dupes." He did not distrust ex-cabriolet drivers because he did not believe them capable of cunning; he did more honour to most of us.

The Duc de Lévis, who had a higher and more personal mission still than that of MM. des Cars and de Saint-Priest, took other duties upon himself. He hunted about for interviews and dinners with men of

position. I served to introduce him to M. Cousin as well as to General Changarnier, and I can bear token to his unalterable politeness, natural impartiality, inexhaustible patience in listening to everything, and his conscientious effort to understand it all; but, after having gone through all the regions of Paris during three winter months much as one travels through a strange country, he finished by returning to his "form" and burying himself there until the following winter.

On my return from Venice, the Duc de Lévis had shown himself very zealous in the accomplishment of the pledges taken in the Count de Chambord's name; he had firmly sustained me in the question of revision; he had even done so against the Duc des Cars, who jibed at the idea of communicating his plans to me. All this having taken place in the spring and the summer, M. de Lévis invited me to spend some days at Noisiel, where he as well as the Duchess always gave me the most cordial welcome. They did not in any way appear hurt at the persistency I showed at Venice to have the Ducs de Noailles and de Valmy summoned to Frohsdorf. I sincerely believe that the Duc de Lévis took no umbrage at it, having too much natural nobility of character and sincere devotion.

MM. des Cars and de Saint-Priest, who had assuredly the same devotion, had more weakness. They were greatly displeased with me at my success, and much feared that of the Ducs de Valmy and Noailles. That they would pass from this discontent to voluntary

calumny is not what any one who knew them could suspect. But they greeted and repeated too readily anything which reached them in the way of second-hand rumours and interested gossip.

In the conversations of the month of August, to which I alluded in my letter to M. Berryer, the Duc des Cars, giving way to an ill-humour which he had not hitherto disclosed so openly, held a very aggressive language against the great orator. I kept secret about it, but it left a smarting wound behind it. It had made me all the more persistent in repeating to the Duc de Lévis that the steadfast affection of Henri IV. for Sully was one of that King's glories, and that the affection of the Count de Chambord for M. Berryer would be of itself the best of programmes. The Duc de Lévis answered me on this head with kind commonplaces, but the counter-work went on beside him and around him, and gained ground in the end. This became gradually as manifest to me as though I were a confidant, and the Nantes report, in confirming all this taught me nothing new.

This lamentable incident was the natural outcome of two contradictory policies. One had for its end to reinstate without cessation or to maintain permanently with the Count de Chambord men able to treat all questions and all possible eventualities, and to accustom him to the society of men worthy of him. The other was content with much less; it enclosed the Count in a monotonous interior where his thoughts were but a monologue; it exerted itself to keep away

or kill all external sounds, and spare royalty from all labours and unpleasantness, even at the expense of France itself and the future of Monarchy. This was the fault and the misfortune whence all the others flowed.

The Marquis de la Ferté, charged to convey to Prague all the grievances relative to the Nantes affair, was better placed than anybody to obtain and bring back favourable replies. He was a son-in-law of Count Molé, and his niece, adopted as his child, had married the Duc d'Ayen, son of the Duc de Noailles.

The Count de Chambord entrusted M. de la Ferté with only verbal replies, but they were satisfactory, and the messenger did not fail to make the most of the message. At the same time, M. de Saint-Priest spoke in very disapproving language of M. de Coislin and M. de la Rochette. The former was summoned before the Prince, scolded, and one may almost say sent home in disgrace; but M. de la Rochette retained the management of the newspaper *L'Espérance du Peuple*, the Chambord organ at Nantes. M. de Grandville and M. de la Guibourgère received no answer, no document whatever which authorised them to believe and say that full justice had been done. This issue had two meanings: in Paris, M. de Lévis and M. de Saint-Priest did not separate from M. Berryer; in the West, the Duc des Cars was not disavowed or made uncomfortable.

A little while after, in May, 1852, M. de Grandville

was taken from us. It is always rash to assert that a man has died of grief; but it is at least permissible to say that M. de Grandville, whose whole existence had been inseparably united with M. Berryer's, died in profound sorrow.

The situation of our committee remained a very perplexing one. The Duc de Valmy openly declared that he could not again participate in a common action with the Duc des Cars, or even the Duc de Lévis; so he retired—not only from the committee but from all political action. The Duc de Noailles was never in the second rank when his personal dignity was concerned, and he would immediately have retired from the committee had not M. Berryer urged him to remain. For my part I had retired in fact, as my time was divided between Nice and Anjou. Moreover, my letter to M. Berryer, transmitted to Prague, might be considered a resignation.

I was, therefore, not at all surprised to learn in the course of the winter of 1852—I cannot fix the date precisely—that the Duc de Lévis had called a final meeting of all the committee, and stated to them, in terms full of esteem and gratitude, that the general circumstances having notably changed, and many of us no longer residing in Paris, the Count de Chambord had no further grounds for requiring periodical gatherings. M. de Lévis graciously added that the Prince, when circumstances compelled it, would claim our special advice. Finally, he declared that as our committee ceased to exist, the Count de Chambord did

not propose for the moment to substitute another for it, and that he would simply have an information office at Paris without any political mission.

This was composed—or rather recomposed, for it had existed in the Rue Saint-Florentin—of the Marquis de la Ferté, Count Fernand de la Ferronnays, Viscount de Circourt, M. de Belleval, and M. d'Escuns.

MM. de la Ferté and de la Ferronnays made it a point of good taste to repeat that the office did not seek and did not exercise any political influence. "But you should seek it and exercise it!" said M. Berryer to them, quite incapable of harbouring resentment, and loving M. de la Ferronnays almost like a son. He also thought highly of M. de la Ferté, and never tired of highly praising the intellect, judgment, and loyal frankness of the Marquise de la Ferté.

On my return from Nice in the spring of 1852, MM. de la Ferté and de la Ferronnays used the same modest language to me, and I replied to them in full sincerity: "Whether you wish it or not, your path cannot be traced in such narrow limits; an office of information cannot but be influential; whoever gathers information must counsel. It is in politics impossible to collect information without using it, whatever may be the personal reserve employed in this kind of correspondence. When you write to the Prince, 'Paris says this, France says that,' you will infallibly introduce notions into his mind which in a short time he will regard as truths. It is you who will henceforth cast into his exile shadows or lights. I there-

fore hold your task as a very serious one, and I entreat you to fulfil it as such!"

The institution of this Bureau de Paris became a general one, applicable to all the departments, and the selections were nearly everywhere made in a very exclusive spirit. These offices were to be impressed with a stamp of a nature not quite clandestine but very discreet. The men selected, solely depending on the favour of the Duc de Lévis or the Duc des Cars, were impressed beforehand with their mind or made it their duty to conform to it. In Paris, where ideas are as mobile as events, they cannot be separated from one another; in the country, where ideas and events are necessarily more scarce, the correspondents fell into the habit of sending worthless gossip in order that their function should not seem a sinecure, and thus was established, from one end of France to the other, a network of the spy system and occult information which passed current for "public opinion." We shall see only too clearly hereafter what influence this system exercised upon the Count de Chambord's mind.

I cannot attribute to myself the merit of absolute foresight, but I can assert that I was soon a prey to very sad presentiments. Nothing in my habitual solitude came to distract me, and what did from time to time arrive was not calculated to comfort me.

In our Sedan disaster General Margueritte was carried, bleeding and dying, into the house occupied by the Emperor. Napoleon III. wished to see the wounded man, who, with a bullet which had passed

through his mouth and lacerated the tongue, could not speak, but wrote these words: "Sire, I am nothing. But look at the army—look at France!" I venture to do myself the justice of saying that, in our disgrace, I had no other sentiment, and that my devotedness ever made me repeat, "Sire, I am nothing. Look at France—France!"

CHATEAU DU BOURG D'IRÉ, Arrondissement de Segré (Maine-et-Loire).

CHAPTER V.

A "CHAMBRÉE" AT AVIGNON—AT BOURG D'IRÉ—THE ELECTORAL QUESTION IN 1852—ABSTENTION OR NON-ABSTENTION.

1852.

After having settled my most pressing business, I once more took the road to Nice, where I had left my wife and daughter under the care of M. and Madame de Caradeuc. I stayed in Paris only the necessary time to clear out my rooms in the Rue de Bac. On my way south I was anxious to thank my friends at Avignon, who came to fetch me on the Rhône boat and had prepared a very brilliant reception. I record my recollections of it here because it well depicts the southern manners, so different from those of the west. MM. Léo de Laborde, de Salvador, d'Averton, and their friends conducted me to a banquet, followed by a visit to one of the workmen's clubs, called a *chambrée*.

Challenged by one of the members, I ascended an improvised rostrum and uttered the language of moderation still in usage by the Conservative party at that

epoch. My first words of acknowledgment were saluted with frenzied applause. I was emboldened so far as to offer the following supposition: "If one of your fellow-countrymen were to come here one day and say to you, 'Let us forget the past.'" "Lé boutérion per la fénestré!" * cried out an interrupter, whose remark was, in turn, covered with applause.

Then I understood that the argument ought not to be carried too far. Still I set up the flag of reconciliation, saluted it, and commended respect for it to my hearers, turning my peroration into a local compliment, which is always well-founded in a town like Avignon. I was going to leave the speaker's stand, very happy at having got out of it without mishap, when a great stir arose in the audience. All eyes were turned towards the end of the hall, whence a workman was borne towards me as if swimming, escorted by the warmest tokens of sympathy. He stopped at the foot of the platform and declaimed in a vibrating voice the following compliment:—

"Illustrious deputy, we in Avignon revere, †
For with wonder posterity you will strike;
Your name alone will be as father round us here,
And there never will be anywhere your like.
August imitator of your fathers,
You can join to the name of de Falloux that of the Just."

On my congratulating him on his talent for improvising, he replied, "Monsieur, how can I help it?

* "We'd throw him out of the window."
† *Illustre deputé, Avignon te revère, &c.*

Nature has favoured me!" I asked my introducers to get me the lines in writing. They promised me to do so, and the next morning they brought them, written by the author's hand. "It loses in the reading," they said, "but we did not want to break our word to you."

By their intelligence and education these gentlemen were far above such literature. But they had been so used from infancy to mere roundly sounding declamation, to speak their popular tongue, to keep up their popularity, that they did not, at such meetings, preserve their judgment intact. I shook them by the hand, saying to myself, "In the West, men get excited on cider; in the South, on words. Looking at the result, it may be the South which has the best of it!"

At Nice, I found my family ready to return to France, and happy to do so, too. For a few weeks I enjoyed the fiery, measured, and proud wit of Paul Delaroche; I exchanged again with M. Sauzet regrets and hopes never to be discouraged; I blessed anew the Marquis and Marquise de Chateauneuf for the good examples received from them, and I returned to my dear retreat of Bourg d'Iré.

When the *coup d'état* of the 2nd of December had taken deep root, at least for several years, and replaced the threats of a Jacquerie by a government thoroughly master of France, but little so of itself, I saw no obstacle to my rural life, and I made up my mind, though I made but a poor clerk of the works, to con-

struct a somewhat more commodious residence than my ancestral home.

My father had bequeathed to me a young bailiff, Baptiste Lemanceau, a very distinguished pupil of an excellent agricultural school. He was not yet twenty-two when I proposed to him to become my farm-bailiff and manager. He had already given proof of rare moral qualities, and I fancied that I discerned in him a kind of agricultural genius. Country life suited my father-in-law and his wife, my wife and my daughter, as well as myself. I felt that my nervous organisation was irremediably affected, and I resigned myself to the prospect of a rural life taken strictly in earnest. I asked Lemanceau if he felt determined on his part to undertake and carry out the works I contemplated. He pledged himself to do so, and no one could better have kept his word. I soon came to consider him as inseparable from my future; I gave him the reins, and to him I owed, and still owe, more even than the peace and interest he infused into my new existence —the greater part of the good I have been able to realise around me, and the honour thereby accruing to me.

The transformation I contemplated was almost equivalent to a new creation. M. Lemanceau devoted himself to it with indefatigable ardour and untiring activity. The problem was to renew the ground and the structure, adapt the house to our infirmities as well as to our habits, and the soil to the developments and experiments of regenerated agriculture. For the

latter branch I have shown the result under the title of "Ten Years' Agriculture," in my *Etudes et Souvenirs*, and I shall not speak again of them here. For the house-building, I shall only describe what may be useful to those upon whom may come—as often happens in our age—abrupt changes of life, and who may wish to turn into enjoyment what is commonly called political chagrin and deceptions.

First, I resolved to construct a house upon rather an original plan, wishing to suit the dwellers in it rather than those who might merely look at it. Symmetry was of little moment to me. We needed repose above all, to which end I divided the building into two quite distinct parts, one for guests whom I wished to leave free in their movements, and the other exclusively reserved for home life, enabling the family to live isolated and take care of themselves without imposing restraint on any one. I took this as my motto, "Neither victim nor torturer," and acted up to it. In order to avoid having any noise overhead, I built no rooms over that part of the ground floor where we were to live, leaving a broad breach in the elevation.

Proposing to spend the whole year in the country, winter as well as summer, I needed two climates, and I managed pretty well to obtain them. On three sides I enclosed, to the north, east, and west, thus sheltered from cold winds, a flower garden which only opened to the south, and was in direct communication with our living rooms. In winter, we could open our

windows and walk about on that side almost as if we were living in Provence. In summer, we could get round into the north by a gallery leading us into Anjou. The height of the rooms in this house with two aims was also very different. The hall, dining-room, and library were twenty-four feet high, the rest, only sixteen. I insisted upon this difference in elevation for the following reasons. In fine weather, I don't mind where I am, for, like everybody else, I am then oftener out of doors than in; but in winter, condemned to habitual seclusion, I yearn for two things, all the air and view I can possibly have. It was therefore to winter that, with the help of stoves, I dedicated the relatively large rooms; and in order not to shut out the landscape, the charm of which is not diminished in my eyes by frost or snow, I treated myself to a great luxury, the only one I have allowed myself in life. I put the large St. Gobain into all my windows, so that the eye would not be annoyed by crossbars and divisions, which have always been very distasteful to me. The very mantelpiece of my drawing-room was surmounted by a large sheet of glass giving an uninterrupted view of what was going on outside—of the foliage coming out and falling, of the grass growing and turned to hay, a pleasure so well described by Madame de Sevigné (in her letter of the 22nd of July, 1671, to M. de Coulanges).

I also allowed myself a few gratifications in the ornamentation: firstly, unity in the oak woodwork, oak

being the local tree; no gilding, no hangings, no showy furniture; a uniform colour pleasant to the eye, but in order to prevent the uniformity degenerating into dulness, a few pictures selected also, not to make the visitors say, "Oh, you have pictures!" but to satisfy my own inclinations.

The hall and the library communicated directly with the chapel, otherwise my wife and daughter would not have been enabled, as they were every evening, to say prayers aloud with the household. This usage was common to the manor-house and the farm. It was rather general in Anjou, and we valued it very much.

As for politics, I did not wholly walk on velvet. It was in vain that I had bidden it farewell; it never yet had let go of me.

The great majority of Legitimists in Anjou decided for abstention, and I never ceased repeating to those whom the dread of Socialism tempted to go still further, "Do not imprudently and unreasonably swell the train of force; do not carry wine to drunken men. Let others follow that course, there will be plenty to do it."

Still, ought we to stand aloof from the country? Could we contemplate the dangers of France with an indifferent eye like lookers-on at a play? In 1830, M. Berryer had not wished that to be done; the most important as the most ardent of his political friends had followed him, and in the stormy passage from 1848 to 1851 we had never let anybody surpass us in efforts at salvation. Ought we now to believe that we no

longer had duties towards the country, or ought we to cease to fulfil them ?

In this respect the Count de Chambord showed himself more uneasy and exclusive than he had done hitherto. I believe a grave error at this date crept into his mind and had a fatal influence over the rest of his career. The ready success of the *coup d' état*, the applause which followed it, and the universal suffrage which sanctioned it, persuaded the Prince that, apart from the violence of the proceedings and the choice of tools, here was a useful warning and perhaps a good model. He did not reason that France granted to the descendants of Bonaparte, the organiser of modern society, what it would refuse the House of Bourbon, compulsorily bound to the memory of the ancient régime. To expect that the masses would betray for the head of traditional royalty the same attraction and the same yielding as for a scion of the race which, by means of the Civil Code, had implanted equality into manners, would be the most deceptive of illusions. Nevertheless, what other motive than this error could explain the abrupt change which took place in the mind, or at least in the bearing, of the Count de Chambord ?

I do not think that, up to the 2nd of December, the Prince was a very advanced liberal, but to his own party he practised parliamentary rule in a large enough measure to give ground for thinking that, when on the throne, he would also practise it without overmuch repugnance. After the 2nd of December, he seemed

in his turn to unmask a noticeable absolutism previously kept in reserve, and he affected not to ask any one's advice—which is worse than asking it sometimes of bad advisers.

The instructions which the Prince shortly afterwards sent to all his correspondents were not previously conceived or discussed outside the inmost circle of Frohsdorf or Venice. These instructions forbade his partisans from taking any oath to the new Constitution about to be promulgated, or entering into any elective body, from the town councils to the Legislative Chamber. These instructions did not gall me in any way, as I had resolved on my own behalf to act thus before receiving them. For other motives, M. Berryer was in the same case. He would not have had elbow-room enough in a legislative body without publicity and strong powers. But between these personal reservations and giving the general and complete advice of abstention there was an abyss which we did not intend to cross, and we firmly said of the Frohsdorf instructions what the Spanish Cortes said one day of a royal decree, "Received with respect and not executed for the service of his Majesty."

If circumstances had allowed I should have willingly kept silence on this delicate point, leaving events to speak for themselves; but I was immediately so placed as to have to explain myself, and constrained to speak out publicly for or against abstention. The Maine-et-Loire Department was soon to elect deputies, and the Segré district—as our electoral group was

termed—based on a voting unit of 30,000, wished me to continue their representative. I did not waver in my refusal. But how was I to prevent this refusal appearing to be in manifest contradiction with my sentiments? How could I prevent my example from being transformed into a theory and becoming an argument in favour of the line of conduct which my conscience reproved? I resolved to get out of the dilemma by my favourite habit, that of telling the truth. I wrote to the electors of the Maine-et-Loire a public letter in order categorically to explain the meaning of my refusal, and not to afford a pretext, at least knowingly, to any misunderstanding. I knew that this was equivalent to meeting certain annoyances half-way. But these would come from without, and unjust reproaches, incurred through sincerity, are but of little weight compared with the internal remorse which a man must feel when he has recoiled from duty through weakness, and when the country's interests have been sacrified solely to gain rest and convenience. So I wrote the following letter, which I got published in *L'Union de l'Ouest*, of January the 24th, 1852:—

"M. le Rédacteur,

"I learn with gratitude full of regret that many of my fellow-countrymen think of sending me to the Legislative Assembly. The state of my health not allowing me to hope that I can fitly fulfil the mandate, my conscience will not allow me to accept it, and I hasten publicly to declare so, in order that the electors may forthwith arrange on another choice.

"Far from wishing to give a political signal, I have taken and I express my resolution, without consulting any of my former

colleagues; and, upon the contrary, I venture to counsel my friends to double their devotion, activity, and energy, wherever they may be fortunate enough to contribute to the service of their country.

"It is ungrudgingly granted to the Legitimists that their principles are favourable to the greatness of nations, but they are blamed for sacrificing too much to an ideal which they are not able to realise, and for too readily immolating the present and its perils to distant views and securities. I believe I can see as well as anybody in the world where this accusation lacks foundation, but no attentive observer will deny its force; it has notably lessened during the last three years, and our perseverance in the same course will completely destroy it.

"The vote of the 20th of December, disencumbered of circumstances about which I need not just now explain myself, taken in its most general sense, testifies to two sentiments of deep justice. These are: for a great people, there is no prosperity without authority; there can be no authority without unity.

"All the safety and future of France lie here.

"Although I heartily wish to abstain from recriminations such as others have been lately lavish of, it cannot be denied that contradictions and divisions have played a deplorable part in official regions.

"The Second of December ought to have been foreseen. It is as much the work of its victims as of its authors.

"Moreover, if I recall a past which, at any rate, cannot be put in doubt or oblivion, it is that I may have the right to say openly to those whom I am addressing: 'Continue to speak everywhere and at all times the disinterested language of union and patriotism. Remain alike loyal to the powerful and the proscribed! More than ever speak to parties of reconciliation, to power of moderation and equity, and to the populace of order and morality! I designedly omit any mention of liberty, for the word is badly understood just now.

"Speak also of patience to the excited. Perplexed by long and multiplied revolutions, the people will not return to the truth by a simple outburst of faith; it will be by the exhaustion of error. Whoever levels an obstacle effaces a bitterness, or disperses a prejudice will accelerate that return. In all times, one of the best ways of serving a cause is to win love to it. In our days there is no other. Let this suffice for our courage as well as for our ambition.

"The polemics of the old parties are long since prohibited; we should wish it were so for ever, but light and discernment speedily grow in our intelligent country. Men will no more be gauged by their ardour and their passions, but they will have to show what is in them by their reflected acts and by merits real, serious, and immediate. Let it be so! In all careers where France is interested and her fate is at stake, we must not be absent or surpassed.

"Therefore I entreat my friends of the Maine-et-Loire to give an example at the present moment which it is painful to me I cannot offer them. They may be sure I envy, as much as I applaud, those who continue this labour of peace and reconciliation to which I have consecrated, without a shadow of restriction, all the efforts of my short public life.

"Yours, &c.,

"A. DE FALLOUX.

"Bourg d'Iré, 23rd January, 1852."

This language produced a good result in the department, as the Conservative union was preserved, and the Segré district elected M. Bucher de Chauvigné, three years previously elected to the Legislative Assembly by the *scrutin de liste*, and a very intelligent member of the Right. But my letter had quite another fate at a distance from the place and events which had inspired it. It displeased those surrounding the Count de Chambord and greatly offended the Orleanist representatives in Paris.

The words, "The Second of December is as much the work of its victims as of its authors" would, under any hypothesis, have irritated M. Thiers and his friends; but this irritation, which I accepted in advance, though with regret, was increased by an event which I was far from foreseeing. At the very hour when my letter appeared at Angers the decree con-

fiscating the property of the Orleans family appeared in the capital, and caused there the most warrantable and animated indignation. In order not to countersign it, M. de Morny had temporarily resigned the portfolio of the Interior, and M. Rouher had also retired. My letter, for anybody who did not notice the date, seemed to come in at the very nick of time as a mark of approval. This apparent coincidence, thoughtlessly accepted, elicited a letter from Jules de Lasteyrie, whose marriage with Mdlle. de Chabot, daughter of the Count de Jarnac, had taken him over to England to see the Duchesse d'Orléans.

M. de Lasteyrie was La Fayette's grandson. His two sisters were married to M. de Rémusat and M. de Corcelle. M. de la Fayette, who played so grand a part in the Revolution, without ever having been at the head of a great party, and who was forced to leave the country to escape the guillotine, was more happy in his family. He exercised and for a long time preserved a real empire over it. His son, George de la Fayette, his son-in-law, the Marquis de Lasteyrie, and his grandchildren professed a very umbrageous and susceptible worship for him. He inculcated into them much coldness for the Legitimists, who had themselves treated him very badly. Jules de Lasteyrie had therefore been educated and had grown up in the midst of much prejudice. But he was an honourable gentleman in the full acceptance of the word.

I met him later, in 1871, so far converted as to vote with ardour for one of the most reactionary

measures of the time. "I," he said, running his eye over the rows of the Left Centre where he had always sat, "I, the grandson of the first National Guardsman, know the vices and dangers of the Citizen Army. Who can hesitate, after my example, to vote for its abolition?" M. de Corcelle chose for a long while to call himself a pure *Fayettiste*, and he entered on the political career through the votes of the Left; but he frankly broke off from that party as soon as religion and the Pope's temporal power were menaced. M. de Rémusat alone remained faithful without interruption to the memory and traditions of General de la Fayette. He became the companion of M. Thiers in the foundation of the Third Republic, and died while engaged in that work. When he felt his end approaching he called in the succour of the Church, and he believed he was addressing a friendly adieu to M. Thiers at his dying bed when he said—

"At our age the parting is not for long."

M. Thiers abruptly left the dying man's bedchamber, and said to those who were showing him out—

"Poor Rémusat has been wanting in tact."

Would to heaven that poor M. Thiers himself had better understood how to make ready for death!

In the midst of these diverse contradictions I cherished the presentiment that, if the Count de Chambord separated himself from the living forces of the country and if this unintended but actual divorce long continued, it would turn to the profit of the

most dangerous counsellors. One of these was M. Chapot, ex-deputy from the South in our Assemblies. He went through the West in the Prince's name to preach abstention, and, if necessary, to impose it. He did me the honour of paying me a visit, and I spoke to him with the entire openness from which I never depart in such matters. At the end of his visit he asked me to put our conversation into writing, in order to be sure of conveying to the Prince nothing but the expression of my own mind.

M. Chapot was a one-eyed man in a coterie where almost all were wholly blind. Did he comment kindly on the note he drew from me? I cannot say; I only know that it was as displeasing as my letter to the Maine-et-Loire electors. I resigned myself to that; to be entirely outspoken I should add that I began to feel an enjoyment thenceforward not without pleasure, that of remaining a firm Royalist while under disfavour of the King. I was soon to add a second delight of the same nature: that of remaining a faithful Catholic in full disfavour of the Pope. Some will say, "Here is the school of pride!" Nay, it is merely the school of conscience, one austere enough for there to be no fear of its recruiting too many scholars. In this sovereign disgrace there was certainly much grief for the heart, but there was also a great relief. A belief is deep, and it appears in the hollow of the crucible wholly freed of all alloy when it knows that it lives deprived of the approval of masters, the goad of success and the smile of fortune!

Under these conditions a man may feel that he is truly devoted. Indeed, what sweeter feeling can there be, and what one nearer to justifiable pride, than serving a cause for its own sake and for the good which is in it?

The elections for the Legislative Chamber were to take place about the end of February. The Opposition, Royalist or Republican, obtained but a small number of representatives. Among the already known Royalists figured the Count de Civrac in the Maine-et-Loire, M. de Kerdrel in the Ille-et-Vilaine, and M. Bouhier de l'Ecluse in La Vendée.

The Republican party won two seats with M. Carnot and General Cavaignac; the Socialists only one with M. Hénon. This little band soon dwindled down after the opening of Parliament, for General Cavaignac, M. Carnot and M. Hénon appeared but to protest and retire. M. de Kerdrel had accepted the seat only on the pressing invitation of his friends in the Vitré district, one of the most Royalist in France; but the solicitations coming from outside annoyed him and he sent in his resignation when the Decennial Power no longer concealed its aims at Imperialism. M. de Kerdrel and I were thus in a singular position, but it was far from cooling our old friendship, for we knew one another to the very core of the heart. He stood in the foremost rank of those who had freed themselves from the word of command, and I appeared much more docile than he, as I had not for an instant set foot on the new ground: but I

did not accept the benefit of this false appearance and seized every opportunity to dissipate doubts.

I find the proof in a letter preserved amongst M. de Bertou's papers. He had not formed part of our Assemblies, but he had often made the journey to Frohsdorf and Venice, and the Duc de Lévis, as well as the Duc des Cars, still cherished a liking for him. He taunted me about the abstention, without concealing from me that he was going a few days after to Venice.

M. de Bertou brought me back from Venice persistent objections to what was styled my indulgence for the Revolution, and recommendations more pressing than ever in favour of abstention. He was charged to lay stress also on an incident which had occurred at Rennes, about which it was thought desirable to make a stir. M. de Freslon, a former friend of M. de Corbières, had proposed—to the stupefaction of the citizens—a resolution in the Conseil-Général for the stability of our institutions. It was a transparent formula through which everybody read "Empire."

I responded to M. de Bertou—

"There is nothing to startle or alarm in that. In Brittany the ultras are more ultra than elsewhere. They are now more Bonapartist. All absolutisms hang together. The cry at Frohsdorf is, 'Behold what comes of putting Legitimists into a Conseil-Général!' It would be fairer to say, 'Behold what comes of putting simpletons and intriguers into it, in place of men of real worth who are now shelved! If M. de Kerdrel, M. de Sesmaisons, and others of their like, had been elected, things would have been very different at Rennes."

At bottom, M. de Bertou was himself fully of my opinion, and I discussed with him only because I saw the shadows behind him of those whom he had lately quitted.

The state of men's minds at that period cannot be properly understood, if it be supposed that a man of moderate opinion had only to contend against the ultra members of the extreme Right. In France, power always has a strong attraction, which is simple enough, since power, even when with bad intentions or of bad origin, still represents a sum of interests from which the honest cannot detach themselves. Therefore, having regard to what I have given above, I must here give a specimen of the counter sentiments. To this effect, I choose the letter I received from Solesmes, because Dom Guéranger is reckoned among the distinguished and upright men of the Catholic party.

"*Pax.*

"Abbey of Solesmes, 10th November, 1852.

"My very dear Friend,

"A curate of Segré, having come to pass a few days in retirement in our monastery, when saying adieu to us before returning to his duties, asked me if I had any message to send to you. I gave him a verbal message, but, on reflection, I asked myself why I should not have written it, and I decided to use the pen, indiscreetly or not.

"For several months I have been thinking of writing to entreat you to return to public affairs in the name of the Church and the country. My affection for you has long been disquieted by the thought of the responsibility you incur by your resistance to the solicitations made to you.

"I entreat you to let yourself be overcome. God will be pleased with you—that ought to suffice you.

"I am as disinterested as possible in the step I take. It proceeds solely from my love for the Church and for my country, and my most sincere attachment to you.

"My friendship does not aspire for a brilliant and influential position for you. I know how readily a principle of honour makes you trample all this kind of thing under foot; but I grow alarmed at seeing you responsible for the good you might have done and the evil which your refusal of operation must inevitably occasion.

"It is not for me to develop all these points of view. You will see them at a glance better than I.

"So, let human affairs follow their destiny, and learn that the duties God imposes upon us are always relative to the present. It is not right to annul oneself to future profit—an uncertain future—unless one is assured of having no duty to do in the present.

"The Church and society claim your services, and God wills it!

"I am of too little consequence to weigh in the balance. So you must see in this step nothing more than the solicitude of an old friend, who wishes to relieve his mind and not to feel guilty of keeping silence when his conscience has long been pressing him to speak.

"Will you kindly offer my respects to Madame de Falloux and receive my tender attachment.

"Fr. Prosper Guéranger, Abbé de Solesmes."

A few days afterwards I received a long letter from the Duc de Valmy, which I cannot recover, but the substance may be judged by my reply to it. The Duke had been deeply offended by the incident of Nantes, and the counter-blow rankled painfully in his heart during the few years of life left to him. He had been good enough to keep my reply in his papers, and it was given me by the Duchess, who had certainly not failed to support my views with her husband. This letter runs thus—

My dear Duke,

"I believe that I have understood the full purport of your letter, and I am going to answer it with a frankness equal to your confidence, for which I am profoundly grateful. I am not discussing any of your points of view. Even should the mind accept some of them, the heart forbids the drawing of any practical conclusion. We can only be bound by our reason, but we are enchained by our honour. The Prince may, by his faults or by his wrong-doing, ruin his destiny and ours; but he cannot change our duties.

"That is the strict code in which I have been brought up, and its principles have passed into my blood. In conforming to it without the suspicion of an examination or a murmur, I do not believe that I am doing the least injury to my country. I was of opinion, and am so still, that we should lend it our co-operation to help it out of the abyss dug by these last sixty years, but it is not on questions of dynasty or the foundation of new governments that we have to act for that end, but in a different though I will not call it an inferior region. We are not compelled to pronounce upon the similarity between the Capet and the Napoleon dynasties, to formulate decrees on the past and prognostications on the future; we have to moralise villages and towns to combat revolutionary influences, and to found and develop religious institutions. This field still remains an immense one. All the strength of the old Royalist party and all which it is famous for may be displayed in this, with great honour to itself and great profit for France. In these limits and to this end, I am ready to incur all the responsibilities of my devotion to the pure commonweal, and I have not modified, in presence of the contrary persistency of the exiled power, any of the ideas which we have often expressed and defended together. Over and above this, I do not know whither we are going or to what we are pledging ourselves, and I cling to my old Vendean soil.

"My dear Duke, here you have the epitome of my inner thoughts rather than a reply to your letter. Forgive my forced brevity, and regard me ever as your most devoted and faithful servant,

"Falloux."

This letter completely succeeded with the Duc de Valmy, which proves it was useful; for in such

matters people rarely listen to advice which runs counter to their own ideas. The Duke's nature was too fine and delicate for him to be at ease when everything was not frank and above board. He left the active Legitimist party when he found, or believed he found, its yoke too narrow; but he remained in the party of honour, and died in 1869, saddened and isolated, having sacrificed without ostentation or reward the advantages which his name would have accounted for and made more acceptable than in some other cases.

CHAPTER VI.

PRELIMINARIES OF THE EMPIRE—RURAL LIFE.

1852—1855.

When I returned to Paris M. de Persigny was Minister of the Interior. I could not compliment him upon it, and I knew from early experience the uselessness of remonstrances. I therefore had not thought of asking for an audience, and I was surprised to recognise his hand on the envelope of a little note. In it he expressed an eager desire to find me at home, and said that unless I wrote to the contrary he would come and ask me for some breakfast the next day. My recollections of that moment are in contrast, it is true, with many apparent or real facts which were subsequently set before the public, but I do not think this a reason for suppressing the truth as it then was. Quite the contrary! Once more it may be concluded that good and evil are seldom complete and invariable in us, and that neither confidence nor distrust ought to be exempt from reservation. Without doubt this is one of the reasons which God, without ceasing to be just, gives

us for hoping that we shall find Him merciful. He sees that our thoughts are often better than our deeds, He knows of our repentance while we are still committing the sin.

On telling Marquet, my factotum, to have a breakfast ready the next morning, I saw an odd struggle begin in him. He was clearly flattered at one of the foremost men of the time showing me this token of interest, and at the same time he had to swallow his personal repugnance. He cut the knot by sending in a repast far enough from luxurious to reveal no desire to make advances.

M. de Persigny was very punctual, and we sat at table without broaching any delicate topic. He was hardly more than seated than he glanced uneasily over the table, and I inquired what he wanted. "Have you no cheese?" he asked.

"No, I never eat it."

"In prison I contracted such a habit for it that it is almost my whole morning's meal; but say no more about it."

"Oh, no, quite the reverse; let's have it!"

So I suggested sending out to the adjacent cheesemonger's for some, which he approved of, and the meal was finished not less heartily than soberly. This trait pleased me. M. de Persigny was above all a fanatic, with the faults but also the good qualities of his dominant passion. One day I saw him come into the house with his face quite convulsed.

"Good heavens! what has happened to you?" I

asked as we exchanged our customary shake of the hand.

"I cannot any longer put up with such a life as I lead," he responded in a still quivering voice. "It is no use forbidding my door under the strictest orders, people with petitions will come. Just now there were seven or eight in my antechamber who had already worried me with their correspondence. I had to rush out of my study with a pistol in each hand shouting to them, 'If you do not all be off I shall fire!'"

He added, with an air of excitement not assumed—

"I never asked the President for anything. I never shall! Oh, that others would do likewise!"

Our modest breakfast over, we set to freely chatting on both sides. "I am ashamed to think of my being on the stage," he said, "and you in the pit. However, as it is the place you choose, tell me frankly what you think of us."

"I do not attach much importance to the opening trifle, I am waiting for the main piece."

"Ah, yes, the Empire!" he returned. "Well, I am going to tell you the plain truth. You do not know what has delayed the Empire. It is the Emperor, and nobody else. A fit of timidity attacked him after the 2nd of December. He takes his ten years' term in earnest, and without wishing to see them out he still does not think it time to cut them short.

"All those around him say the contrary. Morny and I, who are seldom of the same opinion, are thoroughly in agreement hereupon, and we maintain that the

Empire is the natural issue out of the plebiscitum, the elections and the will of France! We have not yet overruled him, but we are not disheartened. I made him stand as candidate for the Presidency against his will; I made him execute the *coup d'état* in the same way, and I shall thus make him an Emperor as well! He is soon going to tour through France, when I shall so deafen him with cheers of "*Vive l'Empéreur!*" that he will have to give in and let us impose on him what he ardently craves without daring to put out his hand for it. Only, I must be still six months Minister of the Interior to manage this."

"Six months!" I exclaimed. "Who can shake your credit with a Prince whom you have served with so much constancy?"

"Two things can: my disposition and the Prince's. I am violent and incapable of complacency, and he is meek but greedy of adulation and personal dominion. I enter into his presence with the finest resolves to contain myself and caress his weakness, with which I have long been acquainted, but at the end of a few minutes I lose control over myself, I break my lance on him, and five times out of six I go out of the Council embroiled with everybody, to the high delight of de Morny. I fancy myself a better politician than de Morny, but he is much more cunning."

On hearing M. de Persigny thus speak of de Morny, I recalled the last remarks of the latter upon Persigny. After a trip to England Persigny brought back some

very new ideas from that country, since demonstrated to be very sound. I felt by instinct that he was in the right, and I said one day to Morny, as we were chatting in one of the lobbies—

"Persigny strikes me sometimes as having second-sight."

"Yes," answered Morny in a tone there was no mistaking, "yes, he has always second-sight but never the first, and I heartily wish he would go and study Kamtckatka!"

The men were one as resolute as the other, but it was impossible to be so under more different forms. They remained incompatible. Persigny grasped a thing at once; Morny gained ground gradually. Persigny was intermittently the Emperor's counsellor; Morny was his constant favourite.

I did not interrupt M. de Persigny to mention this, and he continued—

"Take this from me as likely; I would even say as certain. The President will keep me by him to make the Empire, and I shall do it; then he will dismiss me and others will profit by it. However, that will matter little if he only remains faithful to Napoleonic traditions in his home policy. The genius of the great Emperor was so profound and vast that it saw and foresaw everything, and it will suffice to carry under its wings two or three successors without letting them fall."

I objected that there were many dark facets to the President's mind.

"Oh, yes," he resumed, "the Prince has those flaws, and others besides which I know more of than you do; but he has the name and prestige of Napoleon. Be sure that the Empire, when reconstructed, will only have two chances of ruin—war and the Imperial family. He must take care not to touch the great sword which he does not know how to wield—it will cut his fingers. He must hasten to marry and have a family, so that there will be no talk about his family, which is ever so much worse than is imagined. Let me only be listened to upon these two points and the rest will work itself out with or without me."

Some months later the Emperor was at Bordeaux, where he pronounced four words of magical effect: "The Empire is Peace!"

M. de Persigny triumphed and disappeared.

Shortly after the proclamation of the Empire, in one of my few and brief visits to Paris, M. de Persigny dropped in upon me unawares, while my wife and daughter and myself were still at dinner; he had forced his way in to inform me about his marriage.

"I cannot sufficiently thank heaven," he said, "for the signal blessing accorded me. I am to marry Mdlle. Ney, daughter of the Prince de la Moskowa, and grand-daughter of the Marshal. She is very pious; she is not yet twenty. To favour this alliance, the Emperor makes me a grant of five hundred thousand francs—the first gift I ever received from him;

but I am still more sensitive for the words which accompanied it, for they were words of real affection. So I am come to ask for your good wishes as a wedding present."

He dwelt so naturally on this and on a Christian future that my wife was as much touched as I. When he left us, we found that we had both conceived the idea of making him substantially a wedding present. But the choice embarrassed us. Jewels were not to my wife's taste, as nobody ever thought less of dress for herself or for others; some fashionable article of bric-à-brac did not please us any better. We finally agreed to ask my brother to send us a handsome Roman chaplet. I placed it in an elegant case, and sent it from Bourg d'Iré with a note mentioning that it had been blessed by the Pope. I received the following reply immediately:—

Paris, 7th of May, 1852.

"Dear Friend,

"I cannot express the infinite pleasure given me by your delightful letter, and the precious relic which you kindly intend for my future wife. I confess that I could not wait for the period indicated in your letter, but handed her the charming keepsake at once. She also wished to keep the letter. You would yourself have been touched with the pleasure you have given to her young heart. I thank you for it with all my heart! How proud and happy your friendship makes me! with what happiness do I recall how I have always found you staunch in all the sterner circumstances of my life. Happy or unhappy, I have always seen you come to me like a good genius; and your consolations in misfortune, like your congratulations in good fortune, are the most precious to my heart. Receive my thanks, dear friend! and believe that I am at least worthy of your friendship by the gratitude with which it inspires me.

"F. de Persigny."

Once my family had assembled at Bourg d'Ire, we pursued our labours together with enthusiasm. A man less impassioned than I for his little birthplace would have bought a house ready built. My health, too, would have profited by a more complete repose, and perhaps regained a solidity which fresh anxieties, though very different from political ones, began to injure deeply. But love for a pursuit is always the same, to whatever it may be applied; it always decks what is distant and unknown, to lure us on, and the "Dahin, dahin!" of the German ballad does not ring in the lover's ear alone. The idea of ameliorating and embellishing my place of predilection literally made my heart beat. With perfect sincerity, I believe, I added—but who can be sure of oneself?—that my daughter, then eleven years old, would be getting married one day; that a son-in-law might not be pleased, like me, with the inconvenient dwelling left to me by my father, and that my daughter would leave us if I did not prepare a residence calculated to retain her, or, what would be worse, that she would impose a sacrifice on herself and be ill at ease while staying with us. Finally, I said to myself that France's greatness was composed of the prosperity and morality of every party, and that an improvement of the least extent was still an act of good policy. Of all the reasonings which came to the support of my burning desire, the last is the only one that never deceived me—the one which was the least personal one, and consequently the one most blessed by God.

My wife was taken from me before my old age, and my daughter followed her without having been married. The only glances I should cast around me would be saddened ones, therefore, if I had not made sure of the consolation I recommend to my readers—that of a horizon, limited, I grant, but within which can be seen all the fruit of a moral and material progress in which one has had his share as an initiator.

In speaking here of the charitable side of life, I do not wish to have even the appearance of a pride which is not in my nature, but I believe that I am obeying a useful feeling in leaving behind me some observations upon the misery I have met with, on the means of relief which may be employed and the enjoyment found therein.

A long experience cannot be acquired without one's being struck by the diversity of human misery, and the world must be gazed upon with a very apathetic eye if an inexhaustible compassion is not soon felt within. At the same time one learns that genuine bounty is not content with a few passing and superficial emotions. It is not truly worthy of the name it bears unless it produces habitual and carefully thought-out deeds, which perseveringly enter into the very web of one's whole existence. Then, and only then, does it cease to be a sterile whim and become a fruitful virtue. What is learnt and discovered—and this discovery is a very important one—is that it is much less difficult and onerous to do good than is supposed; it is not wise economy that turns one aside from it, but

thoughtlessness. Few people would be so selfish as to stand aloof from charity if they knew how little costs a good deed done with some care and study, and how little it will entrench on their superfluity; with what imperceptible privations welfare can be substituted among the poor for suffering and ease for poverty.

The first object of our primary effort, in my mind, ought to be the abolition of begging. France is one of the most backward countries in this respect, and the heart aches when one thinks how slowly we have improved public relief. St. Vincent de Paul had to perform miracles of devotion and energy to get a safe asylum established for poor little infants, cast out nude on to the snow, and Louis XVI., visiting the Hôtel Dieu, found three patients in one bed.

Like individuals, societies go to sleep and grow hardened in self-indulgence; men are only corrected and educated by the hard lessons drawn on them by their faults. Would it not be better to be spontaneously softened and purified by forethought? Are we only to be made tender when the lightning reveals the abysses which surround us? Must all progress be purchased by a punishment? Must every new experiment require a revolution?

I take as proof in support of these reflections the splendid reign of Louis XIV., and as witness Madame de Sevigné. She was thoroughly amiable, and she was thoroughly beloved; she was profoundly Christian,

and nobody more keenly admired the severe remonstrances of the preacher Bourdaloue. Nicole of Port-Louis was one of her favourite authors, and she was closely allied with the most austere Jansensists. Yet see with what unconscious levity she relates a drama which should have filled her with horror, and inspired her with the most salutary meditations on her times, her society and herself.

"A poor embroidery-worker in the Faubourg Saint-Narceau," she writes, "was taxed ten crowns for making him free of the craft; he had not the money. He was pressed and pressed again; he still prayed for time, it was refused him; his sorry bed and poor bowl were taken away. When he saw himself in this state fury overcame him; he cut the throats of three of his children who were in his rooms; his wife ran out with a fourth child. The poor fellow is in the Châtelet prison; he will be hanged one of these days. He says that his only grief is that he did not kill his wife and the child she saved. Remember, my daughter, that this is true as if you had seen it, and that since the siege of Jerusalem no such fury has been seen." *

The seventeenth century, and the eighteenth still more, swarm with similar examples, and yet we are astonished that a restoration of the good old times is not a favourite programme with the masses?

Nevertheless, the *Ancien Régime*, and, above all, the Christian times anterior to it, abounded in good hearts and great charitable institutions; but I am not thinking of the good or the wicked now, but of the indifferent, who are as pernicious as they are numerous, and also of those who never have enough fortune

* Madame de Sevigné to Madame de Grignan, 31st July, 1675.

to be generous. It is easy to become rich by confining oneself to what is necessary, and easy to believe oneself poor as soon as one needs what is superfluous.

It was upon the latter that I would fain have urged the extinction of begging in Anjou. The lukewarmness of our age in face of a social interest so manifest is certainly one of the justifiable reproaches which the future reserves for it. But in virtue of this same unconcern the question cannot be solved by the sole effort of individuals; a collective effort is necessary.

I insisted on this in my arguments with M. Vellon, Prefect of Maine-et-Loire, in 1852. He was a man of real superiority, and in him I met with warm sympathy; but difficulties were soon encountered, and he allowed apathy to dishearten him as well as that force of inertia which renders generous movements abortive just as sand bags check a cannon ball. I soon saw that to shake this resistance or rather routine more force and activity than I possessed would be wanted. I had to give up my share of help in the action of the centre on the circumference, and hammer away in the narrow circle where I could move in my own way.

In studying one village one studies all, as the same cases are uniformly reproduced. Everywhere one finds infancy fairly well cared for and instructed, the adult sustained by remunerative labour as long as health and sobriety last, but as soon as illness sets in

or old age approaches, the balance is destroyed and suffering is imminent. If, therefore, schools are organised, if local labour is ensured so that the dull season should not fall during the winter when the most costly needs arise, relief has only to be given to the sick, the infirm and the aged, though this is of itself a vast field.

Let us commence with the ailing; there is no lack of doctors or of remedies, and yet the indispensable resources are nowhere to be had. Question a parish doctor about such or such a patient, and generally his reply will be—

"It is not a serious case. He would easily pull through with abundant perspiration, but there are not enough blankets in the clothes-press!" Or else, "I should have ordered a bath if there was one to be had." Or again, "The convalescence has begun, but the patient would gather strength more rapidly if he could sit up in an easy-chair by the window in the sunshine for a few hours."

Hence one arrives promptly at this painful conclusion: there is a doctor and physic and money, and yet almost everything is lacking. Is this great vacuum, this wide breach difficult to fill in? No; it is nothing, or next to nothing. A large sum is not needed, scarcely the price of a caprice. There should be a small hospital home for the poor—a room in the priest's house, or the Sisters' Home, or the vestry hall, no matter where; a room, with two or three easy-chairs always ready, half-a-dozen blankets, a full-sized bath,

instruments in demand, and lancets and cups to replace leeches, often scarce and always dear. This outfit for the ailing poor would hardly cost a thousand francs at the start; to keep it up would not take fifty francs a year, and this sacrifice would bring a hundredfold what it cost.

So cheaply might we be freed of the intolerable thought that the poor man—who cannot go to the watering-places or call the celebrated physician or surgeon in to his bedside—is unable to procure in his miserable hovel the elementary means of cure; that he should suffer and die, not because his disease is not known or because we are neglectful of him, but because, for the want of forethought and precaution, science and charity are reduced to the same powerlessness. For twenty-five years a hospital-home has existed at Bourg d'Iré; it has never exceeded its humble budget, and not a day has passed without its having done somebody a service.

Old age has other requirements than those of ill-health. It is not an accident, and it sometimes lasts a long time. It cannot be got clear of at a slight expense.

To my knowledge, more than one commune has attempted this test with success by founding a small hospital-home. Six beds in two rooms, three for men and three for women, are rarely all full at once, and the well-kept hospital does not merely relieve poverty. Hearts wounded by chagrin and dispositions embittered by privations quickly grow serene in an insured

shelter and in the benevolent contact with Sisters of Charity, for the idea of affectionate and efficacious relief cannot be separated from the idea of religious attendants. One day M. Cousin said to us on the Ministerial Committee on Education—

"Socrates would not care for the profession of schoolmaster, nor would Saint Vincent de Paul. Stay, I am wrong. The Christian would. I must make this reflection upon the philosopher."

This is still true of the Christian and the philosopher in matters of charity. Infirmities only yield to incessant care, ill-humour lessens with the relief of infirmities, and longevity keeps pace with tranquillity of body and mind.

The hospital-home has another advantage; it is much less expensive, and consequently much less difficult to found than a hospital. Besides, there is no lack of hospitals in France. It is seldom that the chief town of a department has not one endowed under favourable circumstances. It is easy to transport patients thither, and immediate admission is equally easy. On the contrary, hospital-homes, though easier to found and maintain, are by a singular phenomenon much scarcer. This is an evil which should be cured. The hospital-home does not require the constant presence of a doctor, or a complicated pharmacy, or expenses varying in amount and ever recurring. The inmates are few in number and permanent, easy to manage, and only ask, in order to bless God and men, for good sanitary arrangements, a cosy corner at the

fireside or a little nook in the sun in winter, with plenty of air, a little shade, and room to walk in summer. The hospital-home is still home, in other words permits of a quiet life and a serene death. When one sees a hospital-home in operation it is a wonder there is not one in every parish.

This review made, there remain still the poor properly so called, for whom a few alms suffice. To my mind there are but two classes of poor—the genuine and the sham. The latter can never be treated with too much severity, as they are the worst enemies of the genuine poor. If one were sure that the person asking for relief were honest, could one refuse him? It is the doubt about the misery which constitutes the reason or the excuse for refusal. Besides the suspicion which can never be wholly put aside, there is also the doubt about the origin of the poverty. This man is an idler, this one a drunkard, the third an ungrateful fellow. Alas! yes. But if it is wrong of him it is also unfortunate. There are bad rich men. Why should there not be wicked poor? Since the vices and evil deeds of the wealthy do not preclude their having wealth, why should those of the poor deprive him of his sole patrimony, a look of charity?

To overcome one of her scruples it was said to the Princess Palatine, Anne de Gonzagues, "Be of good cheer, madame, it is but a venial sin." "I do not know whether it be venial or not," she replied, "but I know it is a sin, and that is enough to horrify me."

Ought we not to borrow this formula from the Princess, and say on many occasions, "I do not know whether this is a wicked poor man or not, but I do know he is poor, and that ought to touch me with compassion"?

Assuredly if the poor were irreproachable they would almost become rich; but does not the fellowship in defects and sufferings everywhere exist, and ought it not to arouse our pity?

Excepting the ills which are direct visitations of Providence, how many are there which we have not originated or inflicted with our own hands? What more do we require to be less rigorous or more indulgent towards the poor? Something very rare and yet very easy, a reformation of ourselves. Why should we complain of the ingratitude of the poor? Ought we not rather to bless it? Ungrateful! Did God hesitate to make man ungrateful? In immolating Himself for us, did He think that humanity would become invariably full of adoration and gratitude? And yet He gave up His life for us. So what profound joy do they not taste who have the happiness of doing good unseen, without calculation or begrudging. It is then only that a man can pride himself on loving God as He has loved us, and men as He required that we should love them. How, too, can ingratitude be complained of on any occasion when we have to deal with it? When it refuses a duty on earth it completes and more certainly assures us a reward in heaven. If any one declines or neglects his duty towards us he

constitutes us directly the creditor of God. He will Himself settle the account hereafter which has not been settled here below. Whatever pleasure we may have derived from the benevolence or the justice of others, who of us would complain of the change?

After organised charity and spontaneous almsgiving there comes, as it seems to me, another duty in rural life, the impulse given to agriculture or to industrial works, according to the fate destined to us by God and the locality where He has placed us. For my part I could have no hesitation, as I was in an exclusively agricultural district, and I soon took a pride in that pursuit. The attraction of success comes in everywhere, and even in a pugilistic combat conceit makes a man wish to win. My first laurels, culled at the Boissy Agricultural Show, caused me keen emotion. For several hours I kept the letter by me unopened which might announce this success to me, wishing to impose a mortification upon myself. A tinge of politics was also mingled with my satisfaction, for under the Empire no one was expected to carry off a prize but the Emperor or his friends.

At a subsequent show M. Rouher, then Minister of Agriculture, made me understand this in a very ingenuous fashion. We had been on very good terms from 1848 to 1851, and he was so gracious as to congratulate me on the *prix d'honneur* awarded me.

"You have fairly won it," he remarked with a laugh.

"What are you alluding to?"

"Upon my word I really must tell you. The fact is, this is the sort of thing that will ooze out. What happened is just this: when the judges learnt that the winning ox belonged to you they thought they had better give the prize to another breeder, so they pitched on an ox which they had liked, and on looking at it again discovered that it ought to be proclaimed victor! The joke is that this second ox was yours too!"

The *prix d'honneur* was accompanied by a work of art from the *ateliers* of Froment-Meurice. I did not like to go up alone to the platform to receive it, so I took by the arm the man who had really won it, M. Lemanceau; and, not without resistance on his part, made him mount the staircase with me amid well-deserved applause. It was a very great day for me, as my friends well knew. M. Berryer and M. de Montalembert insisted on accompanying me to Boissy, where they spent the whole of the day, and ended it by a visit to the church where St. Louis was baptised. M. de Montalembert pointed out to us the smallest details like an archæologist, and with that eloquent science in which he was such an adept without ever making a parade of it.

M. Berryer paid the closest attention to the fat stock show, and particularly admired a pen of English pigs which had been fattened to the hour. He asked me to send him a pen of the same breed to his place at Augerville. Some precautions had to be taken for

this transmission from one department to another, and many letters were exchanged on the subject between us. During this correspondence, I thought to myself that, if the Second Empire opened letters as the First was fond of doing, the chief of police must have wondered what political secret was hidden in the cipher of "the little English travellers." That would, however, have been showing crass ignorance of M. Berryer's habits. All country occupations were his passion: trees, flowers, vegetables, poultry, all alike interested him. Neither Bar nor Parliament could long separate him from Augerville; he returned there if it was only for a day, and once there it was not his rich library which was the greatest part of his enjoyment.

For that matter, it would be unfair to the country if those who do not know it imagined that only rural pleasures can be enjoyed there. Everything may be had there in a concentrated and consequently improved form. Reading is less distracted, conversation more familiar, and friendship better tested. From this last point of view Anjou was still specially dear to me. It is not on the road to Italy, or Switzerland, or the Spas; none come there except for the purpose of seeing their friends, and I was fond of saying, "I cannot doubt the affection of those who come as far as Bourg d'Iré." In this respect a very good example was set by MM. de Rességuier, de Bertou, and Prince Augustin Galitzin; they were followed by MM. de Broglie, de Melun, de Corcelle, Sauzet, de Salvandy,

de Carné, Lenormant, and Auguste Nicolas. Père Lacordaire and M. de Montalembert often met there. They were both punctiliously exact. They timed their journey so well that though one started from Soréze and the other one from London, they both got to the Tours railway station so as to catch the midnight train for Angers. They met with pleasure but without surprise, having entirely relied on each other, and they arrived together at Bourg d'Iré about 10 A.M., fresh and ready for conversation. M. de Montalembert, who was then restoring the handsome château and lovely estate of La Roche-en-Breuil, held long talks with M. Lemanceau under the trees in the glades which are such a conspicuous feature in Anjou. He was very fond of sylviculture, and this study was the special aim of his journey to Hungary. The vast woods of La Roche greatly profited by it.

The natural inclination of Père Lacordaire was for gardening; he would go every day to the orchard or kitchen garden. I had a gardener who knew his business by long experience. He had never learnt to read or write, but was a very accurate observer, full of jokes, and so sharp and original in his expressions that my wife said he must have been gardener to the Duc de Saint-Simon. Père Lacordaire was very fond of him. One day, opening the garden gate, M. de Montalembert and I had a really interesting picture before us; the old gardener leaning on the handle of his spade driven into the ground, his eyes fastened

with admiration upon the monk in his white robes, who was making him a speech in the most animated tone. "My friend," said Père Lacordaire, "do not follow too closely the rules of M. Dubreuil, famous though he be; he tries to get a premature and over-abundant yield out of his fruit-trees. His system is ingenious but exaggerated. He does not hold close enough to the everlasting laws of nature. Now I am also a gardener—in the children's garden. When fathers confide their sons to me at Sorèze, do you think that I try to draw at once the utmost amount of Greek and Latin from their brains? I take great care not to do that, for I should kill them or make them idiots. I go little by little, with patience and method, according to their age and powers. If you act otherwise, my good friend, you will commence by prodigies and finish by ruined trees!"

Père Lacordaire was right. Our first plantation, on the strict Dubreuil system, rapidly degenerated, and now we only apply it in a modified form.

Combrée, a parish on the boundary of Bourg d'Iré, possesses a free school, one of the finest establishments of the kind in France. I felt much subdued pleasure in conducting my two beloved guests thither. They were both struck by that ever-moving sight, the close and cordial fellowship of masters and pupils. Both made speeches to the various classes assembled in one room, and, at twenty years' distance, I recall with delight that day, while congratulating myself that a house to which I am so attached should have

had the probably unique good fortune of hearing in one day Père Lacordaire and M. de Montalembert. The former gave a lecture on education, the latter a short but eloquent harangue on honour and moral dignity. There was no reporter at Combrée, but there were open minds and grateful spirits, and the memories of that day dwell in the college archives.

Bourg d'Iré only once greeted Père Lacordaire, but M. de Montalembert found a pleasure in returning. Sometimes we two, with Albert de Broglie and Augustin Cochin, would discuss the affairs of the *Correspondant*. During one of these visits Augustin Cochin was accompanied by a foreign friend whom he did us the great pleasure of bringing with him. This was Mr. Monsell, now Lord Emly, who, although an Irish Roman Catholic, was then Under-Secretary at the War Office.

Like all British subjects, Mr. Monsell was a conscientious traveller. After breakfast he was handed a little map sketched out by M. Cochin, showing the places of interest for some miles around. He rode away upon horseback and only returned for dinner. In the evening our conversation embraced all Europe, and with M. de Montalembert's aid brought all tongues into play. It would be hard for any book to equal such conversationalists. Then the *Correspondant* would arrive, containing an article by Père Lacordaire on Albert de Broglie's *Histoire de l'Eglise et de l'Empire romain du IV. Siècle*. The reverend critic has been

very faithful to the precept of praising no man till after death, and this eulogy of a living writer is the only one we have ever had from his pen. Hence we were eager to hear it read, and we begged M. de Montalembert, who read with incomparable freedom and sprightliness, to give us the triple pleasure of hearing such fine prose well read in the presence of the person it directly bore upon. So we all drew eagerly around our reader, almost as much moved as he was himself. At the end of a few pages Mr. Monsell bowed his head and went off to sleep, and soon after he fairly snored. M. de Montalembert stopped, and exclaimed, "Monsell's sleeping may be excused, but snoring is going too far!" Mr. Monsell roused himself with a start, and answered with a coolness more English than Irish, "But, my dear sir, this is an hour when Parliament is sitting!" This was our most agreeable recollection of Mr. Monsell, and whenever one of us nodded off at a reading we would remark good-naturedly, "Parliament is sitting!"

I must add that the agents of the Empire did not fail to take umbrage at this purely friendly and assuredly most inoffensive gathering. M. Labreton, the Imperial Procureur at Segré, wrote to the Procureur-Général of Angers a report which came to my knowledge. In it might be read—

"The standard of the Fusion party is unfurled on the Château of Bourg d'Iré. On the same seat at vespers were seen yesterday M. de Montalembert, M. Berryer, M. de Broglie, M. Cochin, and a great Irish agitator."

M. Berryer sometimes came to Bourg d'Iré, but on this occasion he was only present in their fancy, or rather they took for him the President of the Segré St. Vincent de Paul Conference, who was not altogether unlike him. "The great Irish agitator" was the solitary gentleman who spent all the day on horseback and dozed so deeply on his return.

Only one thing was lacking, and that was to be able to show Madame Swetchine what I was doing. But her wretched health and her enforced visit to one of the spas every year, did not allow me to hope for her visit, and prevented me from pressing her to come. Her maternal kindness overcame all hindrances however. She gave us a week, and showed us once more how such natures as hers are above all petty considerations. Not one detail escaped her, everything drew out some lofty and bright observation. She could always find something to say to the most humble, and her charm did not act less on them than on the intelligences nearer akin to her own. Even now I often come upon a site, a tree, or a cottage on the farm which revives the memory of how she questioned us and summed up her impression in some ingenious and characteristic remark. I was anxious to show my gratitude for the happiness she had brought by giving her a real pleasure. I went with her to Le Mans, by way of Solesmes, to which Dom Guéranger had for long but in vain invited her. Our Benedictine father, though so strict about the least of the rigorous rules and so absorbed in liturgical and theological works,

was, like Père Lacordaire, the most affectionate of sons in the presence of Madame de Swetchine. His tears flowed and his hands trembled as he welcomed her on the threshold of the abbey which she had so greatly contributed to erect, and never had the meeting in God of two Christian souls assumed a more touching character.

CHAPTER VII.

THE "CORRESPONDANT"—THE ACADÉMIE—VISIT TO AUGERVILLE.

1856—1857.

It has been seen with what eagerness—I may say, at present, with what imprudence—the *Univers* lent itself and its following to the apology for the *coup d'état*, and M. Veuillot remembered that he had been a Fusionist and an Orleanist only to give more precision and animosity to his attacks upon his former friends. He appeared to fill two leading parts with equal zeal and talent: one for glorifying the ruling powers and the other for vilifying and demolishing all who cherished a regret or hope beyond the time being. Not only was there in this a great forgetfulness of himself and of others, and a great scorn for the honour and dignity of the Catholic character, but there was also a great danger for the Church. This ardent and aggressive feud wounded many consciences and alienated much sympathy. The veterans of religious strife complained and were disquieted, but their alarm and complaints had no mouthpiece.

The *Union* and the *Gazette de France* were particularly given to political matters. The Liberal journals were too much irritated by the attitude of the *Univers* to continue to us the co-operation lent from 1848 to 1851.

We could not think of soliciting the preliminary authorisation from the Imperial Government, which was indispensable before starting a new paper, and none of us were in a position to obtain the favour. M. de Montalembert was only too eager to atone for his brief adhesion to the Empire; the Prince de Broglie, son of the Duke and grandson of Madame de Staël, was hereditarily devoted to Constitutional Monarchy; not being myself better esteemed at Court than my two friends, we were all three objects of the same mistrust. Hence we had to look about in the press for a newspaper or a review which would accord us hospitality, and we were naturally attracted towards the *Correspondant*, a periodical founded under the Restoration. Often brilliant, sometimes colourless, but always devoted to the alliance of religion and liberty, it kept within the limits of strict orthodoxy under the Empire, and still exists, thanks to the disinterested perseverance and pure renown of the learned Charles Lenormant, a friend to us personally as well as to our ideas. So our treaty was soon sealed.

In connection with an encyclical of Pius IX. on ecclesiastical education, M. Lenormant pleasantly recalled his former friendly relations with M. Veuillot himself, but still he pointed out very clearly what

sentiments separated in their general conduct the *Correspondant* and the *Univers*.

"We were about to reconcile ourselves with the spirit of the age," he said, "and we repaid it for beginning to show some inclination to our ideas by charging it headlong. . . .

"We set forth the harmony of human reason with the truths of the Faith, and our argument was renewed against the reason of fatal errors. . . . It was stated on authority that Catholics spoke of freedom, reason, and science only in order to win partisans, and that, believing themselves now the stronger party, they return to the true spirit of their religion, which consists of condemning liberty, denying reason, mutilating science—a language which, however unjust, has none the less obtained extraordinary credence."*

Developing this order of things, M. Lenormant terminated by these prophetic warnings—

"Excellent weapons were in our hands; we threw them down, and they have been taken up for use against us, and how can we be astonished at the consequences of such a change? By our own experience, we shall not be slow in learning that we must not set against us, even when we are right, as in the defence of religion, the generous feelings of the heart and the living forces of the human mind."†

In the *Correspondant* of the 25th of January, 1856, the Prince de Broglie plainly laid down the aim and end of our enterprises. Nothing is more instructive or more afflicting than to re-peruse these pages twenty-five years later.

"Without the slightest hesitation, current religious polemics," said de Broglie, "accept to its full extent and pursues in all its applications the hostility of modern society and the Church. In

* *Correspondant*, 25th April, 1853.
† *Ibid.*

the eyes of the latter, all modern society comes into the world excommunicated; its rational origin is a state of which no baptism can cleanse it. All is bad, anti-Christian, anti-Catholic, in the principles of modern society; the French Revolution and the Catholic religion are the two opposite poles, and the anathema fulminated wholesale is daily carried out in retail. The only favour shown, I know not why, is to political institutions of recent creation which, notwithstanding, bear the date of 1789 over the principal entrance."

At that date the Empire could not be more transparently named; and, indeed, this was not one of the least strange anomalies of the polemics of the *Univers*. 1789 was excommunicated every morning when it served as starting-point of a parliamentary government and constitutional charter, but it was forgiven when it served as ægis to the Empire, and called cardinals into a Senate by virtue of a Constitution, with '89 as the watchword.

The Prince de Broglie did not confine himself to criticism and epigrams. He sought out what was the true situation of the Church in presence of the nineteenth century, and thus summed it up—

"For modern society the Church ought to be what faith is for reason—not the enemy who fights, but the authority which regulates; the constitutive principles of modern society ought to find in the truths of religion—not the contradiction which condemns, but the complement which achieves and the curb which restrains. . . . . It is not a question of choosing between the principles of '89 and the dogmas of the Catholic religion; but of purifying the principles by dogma and making them move in concert. There is no duel to fight out, but a peace to be concluded. This ought to please Christians better and cost them less."

So grave a debate could not leave the episcopate

indifferent, and I may mention Monsignor Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, and Monsignor Guibert, then Bishop of Viviers, afterwards Archbishop of Tours, and lastly Cardinal-Archbishop of Paris, in the foremost rank of the prelates who the most eloquently reminded their clergy of the danger of identifying themselves with despotism, and of the duty of preserving a respectful independence towards all political parties.

M. de Montalembert, who from September, 1852, had broken the silence imposed upon orators by issuing a vigorous protest, entitled *Des Intêrets Catholiques au Dix-neuvième Siècle*, published in November, 1855, a no less remarkable pamphlet under the title of *De l'Avenir politique de l'Angleterre*, with this epigraph, *Salva libertate potens Lucanus.* At the same time he pressed me also to come forward, like M. de Broglie and M. de Cochin. I was quite ready to do so, for no one was more convinced than I was of the gratuitous and far from honourable risk which we were incurring.

A "warning" had been issued with regard to one of the Prince de Broglie's articles, and another had reached M. Cochin, who sent in his resignation as mayor of the 10th Arrondissement of Paris, when the Empire unmasked its hostility to the Chair of St. Peter's. All this stung me to the quick. I was equally desirous of taking my share of the severities of the Government and the ingratitude of the *Univers.* I prepared a work entitled *Le Parti Catholique—ce qu'il a été, ce qu'il est devenu,* but on the eve of

publication an incident arose in my life which cannot be passed over here.

The ambition of entering the Académie had never entered spontaneously into my mind, but when the Duc de Noailles, M. de Montalembert, the Bishop of Orleans, and M. Berryer held out their hands to me I must confess that I could not resist the temptation. Abbé de Rohan, a friend of Lamartine and Montalembert, who died Cardinal-Archbishop of Besançon, said in private, "The episcopacy frightens me, but I do not think that I am prohibited from wishing for *the cardinal's hat*, which does not necessarily imply a charge of souls."

In due proportion I had a similar feeling. Notwithstanding my fondness for parliamentary contests, I was always alarmed at the responsibilities attached to membership, but I did not feel any reluctance to enjoy the credit which the Académie maintains as a kind of literary cardinalship, and the sole institution in France which has held by its traditions for over two centuries. As far as persons were concerned the Académie offered me also a keen attraction, as I should find there my masters and companions. In my turn, I might contribute to the success of friends dear to me, Père Lacordaire and Père Gratry amongst others.

Furthermore, my health, which became incompatible with the tumult of politics, was no bar to my taking part in the peaceful sittings in the Mazarin-Palace. What a consolation in the retirement to which I was condemned, sometimes to be in the society of the three

incomparable conversationalists of my time: Thiers, Cousin, and Montalembert. Thiers, always witty and ingenious yet natural; Cousin more pompously eloquent and more grandiose in thought and expression; Montalembert, of equal but more varied wit, with a wider and deeper knowledge of the languages and literatures of Europe; but all three masters in the art of making their listeners enchanted at having heard them and satisfied with themselves. I expected to enjoy the high literary taste of M. Villemain and the last gleams of the lofty eloquence of M. Guizot, who, out of political employment, showed himself all the more assiduously at the Académie, taking part in its least debates and exercising there that spirit of dominion which was a second nature to him.

M. Guizot warmly upheld my candidature. On one of his friends saying, "Read *The History of Saint Pius V.*, and see if a Protestant can vote for M. de Falloux"—

"As I have made up my mind to vote for him I am not going to read his books," retorted M. Guizot, and he kept his double pledge.

His declared support would have sufficed to alienate M. Thiers from me, who besides felt revive in him the dissent which had separated us in 1851 in the debate on the revision of the Constitution. Nevertheless, I was elected on the 10th of April, 1856, in the place of Count Molé, but up to that very morning it was believed that M. de Rémusat would refuse me his vote, which he only gave at the last moment and with a very bad grace. M. Thiers did not appear at the

meeting; still he did not declare war on me, and his friend, M. Mignet, was one of the kindest promoters of my candidature.

I should have included M. Molé among the moral authorities and superior spirits whom I was happy to join, but unfortunately it was his very death which opened the doors of the Académie to me. At least I found some comfort in composing his eulogy, and I paid the tribute which was due to his rare parts and rare kindness for me, by endeavouring to paint him in his true light. I exclusively devoted my reception address to him without yielding to any malicious side remarks, such as I might have found illustrious precedents for. I had devoted my peroration to the perseverance in the monarchical faith which had led M. Molé to go in his declining years and offer homage to the Count de Chambord, then at Carlsbad.

When charged with its own censorship a body often does its work with extreme timidity. This was the case with the Académie; it consented to show a spirit of opposition under the Empire, but not too direct or bold, and my peroration was abridged by the Committee in the official sitting which precedes all public ones.

Though seats are reserved for the family of the speaker, my wife and daughter, on the hint of M. Pingard, the perfect type of the academic usher, went to the Palais-Mazarin before me, and in the excitement of the moment forgot to send back the carriage for me. Time running short I had to take a hackney

carriage, and I arrived at the Institute very nervous as to the possible consequences of a delay very unlike the excessive punctuality for which I am habitually reproached. I hurried up the stairs, but on reaching the top step I perceived that I had left my speech in the carriage. I ran down the stairs quicker than I had mounted them, looking for the vehicle. It was gone! and there I was on the pavement of the quay in the academician's costume, a coat embroidered with green palm-leaves, a cocked-hat, and a sword, racing through the crowd in pursuit of my cab, which I finally overtook with great difficulty. My speech was lying quietly on the seat, little dreaming of the anguish it had caused me. I snatched it up and hurried back breathlessly to join my colleagues just as the sitting was being formally opened. I knew what sorrow my wife and daughter would feel at their forgetfulness and I kept the secret. I spoke of it only some years afterwards, when it was certain that all sensitiveness on the subject would be dulled.

From the date of my standing as candidate at the Académie I suspended my publication against the *Univers*, to the great displeasure of Cousin and Mignet.

"You will remove several obstacles," they said, "and certainly increase the number of your votes if you will also increase your claim to them."

I certainly felt the need of augmenting my claims and the number of my suffrages, but I would not do so at such a price, and I stood firmly to my guns.

I recall this resistance now not without some satis-

faction. We must appreciate sacrifices in this world not for what they are worth but for what they cost; and the sacrifice of the Académie would have cost me much. Success having rewarded me, I at all events enjoyed it without remorse.

I had gained my chair but I had not yet occupied it, when M. Berryer came to inform me with much satisfaction that the Bishop of Orleans, on a pastoral progress, would spend a few days at Augerville. He wished some of his friends to meet "his dear bishop," as he called him.

M. Dupanloup, whom the Académie had elected by a large majority, was the object of the most respectful sympathy, which was his due, for he was a thorough Academician. The diocese of Orleans had hailed him with unusual demonstrations of delight. He responded with that prodigal zeal of his which he preserved to the very last. The Chapelle St.-Mesnin Seminary for maintaining and spreading among pupils and masters the taste for classical studies, which had made of him from a youth a most distinguished Hellenist and Latinist, was the object of his special predilection.

Saint Sulpice Seminary possessed, near Issy, a country house, a former residence of Queen Marguerite de Valois, where was preserved a billiard table said to be of Henry IV.'s time. In the days of Abbé Dupanloup this table had become an invalid with indisputable claims to retirement, which young Dupanloup wittily brought out in Latin verses addressed to the Bishop of Hermopolis, then Minister of Public Worship. The

petition was graciously received, and soon afterwards Mgr. Frayssinonous, also a great lover of billiards and Latin literature, came over to Issy to inaugurate a new billiard table, asking the young poet and the leading seminarists to play with him.

Abbé Dupanloup, when he became Bishop of Orleans, did not wish the pupils of La Chapelle to limit themselves to Latin poetry, but, valiantly seconded by eminent assistants, he obtained a result worthy of our olden universities. The masterpieces of Sophocles and Euripides were performed in the large hall of the Bishop's palace with such success that the echo of it travelled a long way. From all parts, even from the Académie Française and the Institute, invitations were solicited. *Electra*, *Odysseus*, *Philoctetes*, and the *Persians* were played once or more before an audience every year more appreciative. One of these brilliant solemnities was described in the *Revue Littéraire* by the competent pen of Charles Lenormant.

The Académie was so eager to elect the Bishop of Orleans that it gave him the first vacant chair, which happened to be that of M. Tissot, a distinguished Latinist but an ardent Revolutionist, a hardened Voltairian, and besides a man very little considered. A stronger testimony to the tact and resources of mind in an orator could not be given than in entrusting the eulogy of such a predecessor to a bishop. From this point of view, the new member's discourse was a masterpiece, truthful from one end to the other to

this fine passage, which raised a thunderpeal of applause:

"On reading my predecessor's works I did not look for points where we differed. This was useless, to say the least of it. No, I have looked in them for what might have been our possible connecting link, if it had been granted me to find one in this world. I have acted towards him as I have done to all men, towards all those whom it has pleased Providence to place in my path. What I looked for is not that which parts us but that which brings us nearer to each other, not discord but concord."

The whole address breathed that ardent love for classical literature which occupied a place in the Bishop's heart next after the duties of his vocation: "It is not by a vain figure of speech that we talk of the sanctuary of letters! In their most simple and vulgar expression they still comprise the powerful harmony of words, ideas and things, in other words the peace of the world. 'Troubles are bad grammarians,' said Montaigne of old."

A piece of good fortune at this sitting was the selection, according to the regulations, of M. de Salvandy to speak in the name of the Académie. He had to receive almost one after the other the Bishop of Orleans, M. Berryer, and M. de Sacy, and, in order to reach the same high level in his estimate of three men so different, rare suppleness of talent was required. This task did not surpass his powers. In all his oratorical career perhaps never did the gift of a language, always

elevated because it was the expression of a truly noble heart, shine more brightly than in this triple ordeal.

"Yes," he said to the Bishop of Orleans on the 9th of November, 1854, borrowing something of the prelate's own language, "great men of letters are the intellectual aristocracy of mankind. You plant their family-tree in heaven itself. It is indeed when man feels and thinks that one sees clearly that God has made him in His own image. You have taken care to omit that point, monsieur, and as great things are linked together you found a language in which to express it which was on a level with your ideas. In hearing you one knew whence descended your speech and whither it would reascend.

"Man is incomplete and mutilated when this sentiment, or principle, or clear light is stifled or lulled to sleep in him. The human mind, far from rising higher, as has been seen only too well, becomes corrupt and abased when it abjures this salutary assistance. The country has not the benefit either of all his powers, or all his lights, or all his greatness, when, through fear or passion, he happens not to do honour to that grand hierarchy, called by history the Church of France, which has formed so considerable a part of her genius and power."

Rendering homage to the Bishop's firmness and perseverance, M. de Salvandy said—

"The minister of eternal hopes, you do not know the discouragement of souls disproportioned to their

tasks and the fretfulness of mediocre characters and narrow minds."

Tracing this full-length portrait of Mgr. Dupanloup, M. de Salvandy could not forget one of his most characteristic traits, his vocation for education.

"There is," he said, "a second apostleship holding so high a place in your life that it would have sufficed to fill it entirely. For more than twenty-five years you have been in yourself alone an educational school."

These academic recollections make one understand why M. de Salvandy was the first guest at the Augerville fête; M. de Montalembert was next invited. Meeting M. Thiers he spoke to him about the party.

"Why did not Berryer invite me?" inquired M. Thiers. "I should have been as happy as you to see the Bishop of Orleans in private life, I should not be sorry either to see Berryer in the country. They say it is most interesting to see him in his dear Augerville."

Notified of this, Berryer hastened to M. Thiers and urged him to join us, as well as M. Mignet and M. Vitet. In the minor details of life, M. Berryer was the most punctilious of men, and he gave us the most precise information as to the railways and the livery stable keepers, so that we all reached Augerville together one fine day in May.

At dinner, M. de Salvandy sat opposite M. Thiers. They had never been on the same side in the old Chamber of Deputies, and there was little love lost between them. In allusion to the function of Rector, which M. de Salvandy had filled as Minister of Public

Instruction, M. Thiers often called him with a mocking air, "My dear Magnifico!" and M. de Salvandy, feigning not to take this title for a joke, would retort with some eulogy of M. Guizot. This time it was my name which served as a weapon of attack. Profiting by a moment's lull and raising his voice, M. de Salvandy thus addressed M. Thiers:

"Have you read the last number of the *Correspondant?*"

"Not yet, but I brought it with me."

"Read it! you will see how they are erecting a pedestal to one to whom you refused a chair."

The wit was clearly ready made, and M. Thiers saw that M. de Salvandy only wanted a retort to continue the attack; so he said shortly, "I will read it, I will read it!"

And he turned to the Bishop of Orleans, who willingly came to his help. But for this opening skirmish, immediately appeased, all passed off most cordially. Next day the guests took a hurried look at the wild beauties of Augerville; but, save myself, none of M. Berryer's guests shared his love for the country, and they preferred to employ the afternoon in visiting the Château de Malesherbes. Its proprietor, the Count de Chateaubriand, had been educated at Juilly like M. Berryer, and, like M. de Grandville, he had remained his faithful friend all the time. Nephew of the Vicomte de Chateaubriand and inheritor of Malesherbes, he maintained himself by his virtue upon a level befitting those two great names. This handsome

residence was still melancholy and despoiled as the Terror had left it. M. de Chateaubriand lived there a good deal, without thinking of restoring it. His fortune would have allowed him the luxury, but his inexhaustible charity prohibited it. Perhaps also he thought that walls on which hung such family portraits needed no further decoration. Flanked by ancient towers, surrounded by broad ditches, Augerville, to which is attached the memory of the merchants' provost Lhuillier, who handed the keys of Paris to Henri IV., also contained interesting souvenirs personal to M. Berryer. Facing the *chef d'œuvre* given by the carpenters to the lawyer who won their case, was a very fine though unfinished portrait of Charles X., painted by Gerard, and given to M. Berryer by the King. M. Thiers gazed on it attentively before saying—

"There's a face which breathes loyalty and goodness. Berryer, let us know what were the real feelings of the King on signing the *Ordonnances?* Did he knowingly step outside of the *Charte,* or did he sincerely believe in the plenitude of his rights by virtue of Article XIV?"

"I shall answer you fully and frankly if you will tell me what the Duc d'Orléans and you thought of when you effected the Revolution of July?"

"That need be no obstacle!" replied M. Thiers, who rarely had to be entreated to speak. Standing with his back to the mantelpiece, his hands behind his back, somewhat like Bonaparte, he sketched the

three days with the most thorough good nature, and with the colours and animation of truth—a picture of which I believe the subjoined is a faithful copy :—

"To begin with, I must own that in making the July Revolution, neither the Duc d'Orléans nor M. Lafitte nor any of us clearly saw how far it would lead us. The Duke was always ready to court popularity, but he chiefly sought some buckler against the faults of the King and a safeguard for his fortune, to which he clung more like the father of a family than a miser; for he was not really a miser, as he is so often accused of being. He had no grandeur in his tastes, I grant, but he liked to spend money in his own way, and from time to time he would be prodigal also in his own fashion.

"He had but two fixed thoughts—not to overturn the King, and not to follow him into a new exile. When, after the Three Days, the crown was offered him, he had to be dragged out of his retirement as if he were going to the pillory [these are M. Thiers' own words], and shown that he had no choice but the throne or exile.

"M. Lafitte was an honest and ingenuous man, vain, horrified at the street riots, but anxious to play a part. He would have accepted it just as well from Charles X. as from Louis Philippe if it had been offered to him in time.

"Casimir Périer roared like a lion as soon as any one talked of touching the dynasty, and Guizot was

too sound a disciple of Royer-Collard to march honestly with us. La Fayette alone had a grudge against the Bourbons, but he had no liking for the Duc d'Orleans, and he had to be converted to our scheme in order that he might convert others.

"For my part, I was really the son of the Revolution, and I loved only my parent; but that was the very reason why I did not want to entangle him lightly. I believed the Restoration stronger than it was or chose to be. There was no doubt raised as to the fidelity of the army, and I could not imagine that no use would be made of it.

"From hour to hour we were emboldened as the defence in proportion weakened; but we always expected some attack, and most of us had resigned ourselves to it. You may be thoroughly assured that for several hours the Duc de Mortemart held the destinies of France in his hand. Had he been quicker, bolder, or cleverer, he would have caused the abdications to be accepted; many leaders of the Opposition secretly desired them; all would have submitted to them with more or less ill-grace.

"At Rambouillet there was still time to save the Monarchy if the King himself had attempted it. On seeing the mob rushing confusedly in pursuit of the King, we believed that they would be driven back towards Paris at the point of the sword. The leaders of that expedition thought of saving Paris from riot rather than of mastering the regiments and the powerful artillery, commanded by the intrepid General

Vincent, who, like all his officers and men, only awaited a sign from the King.

"We made the July Revolution because we were allowed to do so. If we had been given back the *Charte*, with the Duc d'Orléans' regency as a guarantee for the future, we should have considered this arrangement a decided success, with the exception of a very small knot of enemies or malcontents. Those who said they had played a comedy during the fifteen years of the Restoration were boasting, or, rather, slandering themselves."

After this pointed and clear narrative, M. Berryer kept his word and discharged his task as genially as M. Thiers had done.

"I never knew a kinder or a more lovable heart than that of Charles X.," he said. "He had the defects of his generation and education, but he also had their good points. He loved France, and sincerely thought to save her, while, above all, preserving the rights and prerogatives of the Crown. This starting-point was undoubtedly correct, as the sequel clearly proved. But the perturbations inseparable from an epoch of transition alarmed him beyond measure—his alarm being fostered by friends less straightforward than himself. If the Left had received the Martignac Ministry more favourably, the King would not, of his own volition, have given up that course. He had a long-standing affection for several members of that Cabinet, notably for MM. de La Ferronnays and Hyde de Neuville, and he had not

come into contact with M. de Martignac without being subject to his charm.

Prince de Polignac, the friend of his youth, did not strike him as a great politician, and on that head he rather held him in distrust. What suddenly drew him closely to this fatal friend was that M. de Polignac and his allies at the Tuileries had always foretold the King that his concessions were useless and could not in the least disarm the Opposition, and that sooner or later he would be constrained to call in an exclusively Royalist Ministry to fight and win the final battle of Royalty against the Revolution.

"On returning from his tour in Alsace, the King was exultant and prodigal to his Ministry of tokens of satisfaction. But when, thanks to the extreme Right, the Left committed the unpardonable fault of checking M. de Martignac, the King remembered M. de Polignac's prophecies. He thought that he had better do tardy justice to this misunderstood friend's political foresight, and, without reservation, gave himself over, not, as believed, to personal affection, but to a feeling very akin to the making of amends. Still it took a year, and then went much against the grain for him to sign the *Ordonnances*. At that very moment, if some of the Polignac Ministry had been as courageous as they were sensible, if they had not obeyed the disastrous doctrine of dumb and passive fidelity, and if they had offered their resignations to the King instead of their heads, the Monarchy might still have been saved.

"As for the Prince de Polignac, I shall speak of him only with respect and regret," proceeded M. de Berryer after a little hesitation. "It was he who opened my political career to me. He worshipped his family, and held from childhood a high opinion of his destiny.

"The Polignacs are originally from Auvergne, where popular proverbs bear token to their grandeur. At the top of a hill near the Puy may be seen the imposing ruins of a feudal castle, built, pursuant to tradition, on the remains of a Temple of Apollo, and there used to be quoted in the district this fragment of an old legend: 'If the King were gone, who would be King?—M. de Polignac. If there were no God, who would be God?—M. de Polignac, if he would consent.'

"This inborn presumption was not the only danger in the Prince de Polignac's mind," added M. Berryer. "I must admit the other: he was a visionary, in the true acceptance of the word. He believed himself in supernatural communication with heaven."

This strange fact, since recorded in M. Ernest Daudet's excellent history of *Le Ministère de M. de Martignac*, had not been then divulged. Since then, in a piquant study upon *Charles X. et ses nouveaux historiens*, the Count de Ludré sketched this very finely touched off portrait of the last Minister of the Revolution:—

"M. de Polignac possessed intellect, uprightness, and little ambition. But prison had left its fatal brand on this meditative mind. M. de Polignac did not know mankind, for he dwelt in the world of abstractions and theories; highly unfit for action.

He conceived vast plans, more ingenious than solid; moreover, he fancied himself illuminated from above. It is true that he carefully concealed the singular favours of which he believed himself the object on the part of the celestial powers, but it cannot be denied that this weird illusion had marked influence on his conduct."

"Marked influence" is too indulgent. *Illuminism* is always a grave danger in politics, because it carries illusion and obstinacy into a sphere where no demonstration can affect them. So thought M. Berryer without concealing it, and I return to his tale.

"The Prince de Polignac," he told us, "honestly believed himself to be an English Constitutionalist. He thought he was going to save the aristocracy, as the King thought to save royalty, not with despotic views, but in order to secure a strong and well-regulated liberty, as in England.

"Unfortunately, he did not confine himself to that. This is how I came to know it. M. Mandroux-Vertamy, a distinguished Parisian advocate, was a compatriot of the Prince de Polignac. He smoothed my way to my first election in Auvergne, and, soon after, presented me to the President of the Council. I received from him the kindest of welcomes. The Prince spoke to me of my father and of myself in terms which still stir me, and offered me the post of Minister of Justice. I declined, alleging my complete political inexperience. 'Some men never need experience,' he replied. This speech struck me painfully from his lips, and I understood that he only too well applied it to himself.

"I endeavoured to protest, but he went on to say: 'You believe my undertaking rash and premature, but you dare not tell me so. Well, I will have more confidence in you than you have in me. Yes, perhaps I should not have strength enough to carry it out to a good conclusion if I were alone. But I am going to reveal to you what I have told to only a few friends. Every day God assists me by communications as to the origin of which I cannot be deceived.'

"At these words I was seized with downright terror," continued M. Berryer. "All at once I saw the ruin of the Monarchy before me and the era of revolutions indefinitely reopened. I faltered out some excuses in incoherent terms, and precipitately retired. A law case called me into the country, though my duties in Parliament had almost made me give up my professional engagements; but I changed my resolution, feeling that all advice was useless. I sent for post horses, and quitted Paris with my soul full of anguish and sinister presentiments."

The conversation, raised to this high pitch of interest, would be prolonged rather deep into the night. Excepting the Bishop of Orleans, whom I never knew, even on such occasion when it was a great sacrifice to do so, retire from a drawing-room later than ten o'clock, everybody listened to these anecdotes to the end, most of us with a feeling of deep personal interest.

In the morning M. de Montalembert and I had only just gone into the Bishop's room, to repeat the evening's conversation and to talk about the *Correspondant,*

with which he was closely associated, when we heard a tap at the door. M. Thiers walked in.

This unexpected visit rather annoyed us at first, but this feeling soon passed off. M. Thiers, seeing that he had intruded, neatly excused himself as being eager to thank me for the passage from the *Correspondant* which I had shown him. In my turn, I said I was the person obliged, and all that we thought of was how to keep him with us. The conversation soon became what he could so easily make it. He was in this respect unexcelled; he never dwelt upon the petty sides of a question, but exhausted whatever topic was brought up. The Bishop of Orleans having, by an expression of regret at having lost so much, revived the evening's conversation, we plunged deep into the subject.

"Will you allow me," I asked M. Thiers, "to utter a sentiment which has been worrying me ever since yesterday? You and M. Berryer have shown that the July Revolution was due to a terrible misunderstanding; M. Berryer demonstrating that Charles X. did not knowingly lay hands on public liberties, and you that the Duc d'Orléans resigned himself to accept the crown rather than that he sought for it. Well, ought France to be for everlasting the victim of such mistakes? Those old men, whose age separated them from modern France more than anything else, are gone; the impatient young men whose inexperience led them beyond the goal in those days have arrived, like you, at political maturity; ought not France to

gain something hereby? Will you not tell her openly and publicly what you said yesterday in private? Can your patriotism remain content with sterile confidences?"

M. Thiers answering and I again replying, the Bishop of Orleans and M. de Montalembert joining in, I believe I may assert that four men never spoke more conscientiously and heartily between themselves. I went so far as to say—

"Do you not fear that your country may write on your gravestone some day, 'M. Thiers, who clearly saw all these vile evils, would not repair any of them?'"

"No, no!" quickly responded M. Thiers with a tone of deep resolution, "my country will never make an appeal in vain to my love for her. Let the events come for which you long, and for which I long also more than you perhaps believe, and I shall not draw back from truths or even from confessions. I am a Monarchist in a different way from you in some respects, but as much as you. I am convinced of the superiority of the monarchical system, and moreover that the French character and the republican system are incompatible. When all that remains to settle are the details of the question, you will find me doing for the Monarchy what you have seen me doing for religion with my venerable friend the Bishop of Orleans."

As he finished speaking, M. Thiers rose to shake M. Dupanloup's hand, the latter bursting into tears. At that moment I affirm that M. Thiers was sincere; there are many proofs of it. I affirm that his language

and his belief never varied up to the terrible year of 1871. At that date a visible change took place in his mind. What temptations came from without? What from within? This is not the place to go into that matter.

Next day we left Augerville, more than ever admiring our host, who gained upon close acquaintance, thoroughly attached to one another by bonds either drawn tighter or renewed, to remain so for all the duration of the Empire.

For my part I had only been accidentally drawn out of my retirement, and I returned to it as a matter of course. What was my surprise at the end of a few weeks to see the pleasure trip to Augerville dragged into the field of polemics, under the title of "The Augerville Intrigue." This odd transformation had come about in this way.

A Legitimist organ, with which I had never had any connection, was published at Orleans under the title of the *Moniteur du Loiret*. Its chief editor, M. Lavedan, afterwards my friend but a stranger to me at the time, was led by some argumentative incident to treat of the Flag question. This created a good deal of irritation among the extreme Right. "Who can be inspiring such audacity? The Bishop of Orleans of course!" "But why pitch on such a moment?" The answer was ready to hand. "Augerville has just been offering hospitality to M. Thiers and M. de Falloux under pretence of celebrating the Bishop's visit. Appearances were inoffensive, but they cloaked a plot:

the real aim was to overcome M. Thiers' opposition to M. de Falloux's admission to the Académie. It was a stout resistance. In order to triumph, a great holocaust was necessary. M. Dupanloup and M. de Falloux did not hesitate; they pledged themselves to wage war under the tricolour flag. M. Thiers thereupon promised his vote, and the Orleanist sheet is only paying the debt contracted with him."

Manzoni says of a character in *I Promessi Sposi*, "His speech had no sense, and did not even seem to have any." The Augerville Intrigue was of the same kind. At Augerville I had nothing to ask of M. Thiers, and he had nothing to give, as my election at the Académie had taken place three weeks before.

And without taking into account this crushing testimony of dates, what man of intelligence would have thought of taking payment in such singular coin as an engagement made by me in a question totally out of my province? Lastly, all politicians know how this question was met and dealt with almost on the morrow of the 24th February. (See the eloquent pamphlet of M. Sauzet.)

"Party spirit" is a regular expression in use, but "Party stupidity" should be used. This alone would explain such blind credulity.

"The Augerville Intrigue" made a good deal of noise, and other absurdities of the same kind were soon added to it to fortify and prolong the incident. From this period dates the invention of the nickname

of *cocardier*, which made a hit and survived. It had "a run" in several newspapers which do not readily relax their hold upon a calumny.

I contented myself with a curt rectification, and sank back into an indifference which may be taken for sincere inasmuch as I have waited thirty years before defending myself. Still I was grieved to see certain Legitimist and religious writers stoop so low.

In particular I wondered what impression it would make on my Augerville host. What a commentary on a gathering, where all who took part in it were occupied with and moved by the most elevated interests! What an encouragement for such well-disposed allies to become friends? How far might not their resentment go? To be unjust and ungrateful in private life is a wrong which affects only the wrongdoer, but to be so in public life is to compromise one's cause and to provoke justifiable indignation.

Do those who indulged then and still indulge in such culpable caprices fail to calculate their deplorable consequences?

The Bishop of Orleans did not deign to notice this unworthy trick except with the sad smile he bestowed upon such matters. Ever since 1850 he had gone through the apprenticeship of insult and injustice; but his intrepid labours and never-failing devotion sought no other testimony than that of his conscience. Besides, at that epoch, he had his eyes fixed on much more serious affairs.

If I had stood in any need of comfort, could I have

had it better than in the following letter from Père de Ravignan:

"Issenheim, near Soultz, Haut Rhin,
Thursday, 10th July, 1856.

"My very dear Count,

"I assure you that I had no need of your eloquent work on *Le Parti Catholique* to remind me of all that the Church owes you—what all owe you in the way of gratitude. Your great kindness in sending me a copy of your pamphlet furnishes me with the occasion of expressing this and of satisfying a craving of my heart by testifying my deep and true thankfulness. Yes, it is you, after Heaven, who has restored to the Church one of her dearest liberties,* and that must never be forgotten. Believe that we, who profit by the benefits which reopened a road closed to our zeal, wish always to proclaim before God and man our entire gratitude; and I can honestly say that in the dispute which you have brought to a close the one thing which chiefly afflicted me was to see your great and powerful intervention in the freeing of the Church and of her education misinterpreted.

"May the God of all consolation bless you, and may He give to all near and dear to you a plenteous reward.

"Now, the effect will have been produced and things will have been made clear. Let us hope that useful results will follow, so that all efforts may henceforth be concentrated upon the enemies which still remain.

"My dear Count, I keenly regretted not having seen you recently in Paris. I should have liked to renew to you the sincere expression of my most devoted feelings, which will only end with my life alone.

"X. de Ravignan, S.J."

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* De Falloux's Act for Religious Education, which was rescinded by the House while the author was on his deathbed.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEATH OF MADAME SWETCHINE.—THE EMPIRE AND THE CLERGY. — THE WAR WITH ITALY. — AN IMPERIAL AUDIENCE.—AFTER THE AUDIENCE AT THE TUILERIES.

1856—1860.

I was enjoying a visit at Bourg d'Iré from my brother and the rare pleasure of going over my Roman memories with him, when I was prostrated by a letter from Cloppet, Madame Swetchine's faithful servant, informing me that his mistress's condition caused great alarm to the physicians. I started immediately for Paris. In my "Life of Madame Swetchine" I have written an account of her slow and affecting end. I have no need, therefore, to repeat anything of it here, nor need I say how profound was my grief at the loss of such a friend and counsellor, nor how grateful I felt for her token of confidence in leaving me her papers.

The examination of them was not only a sudden and powerful attraction for me in my secluded life, coming like manna from heaven, but it further gave me one of the richest enjoyments in this world—that

of seeing how friendship can rise to the height of the most persevering sacrifices. I was still, as I had been since 1849, unable to apply my eyes to any toil whatever. Thus I was about to become the owner of a treasury of thoughts and sentiments calculated to comfort and fortify Christians, so long as the united language of faith and reason preserve their sway, without the power of sharing it with anybody. I stood before an inexhaustible mine like a miner without tools; but my own friends and those of Madame Swetchine hastened to my relief with a devotedness the memory of which still touches me. Undaunted by distance or seasons, they plunged into researches unaided by any hint, order or forecast. They gave themselves up to this labour without stint or relaxation, eventually evolving a whole as complete as could be given by the most tenacious and conscientious explorers. They took all the trouble and let me gather all the honour. It is true that I associated their names with mine, but I have always been pained that the public divided the credit unfairly and unevenly, and I am glad to renew in this place the expression of my unvarying gratitude. Nor must I omit recalling the fact that the two first heralds of Madame Swetchine's renown, outside of her own circle, were Saint-Marc Girardin, who on the day after the first publication of the book described Madame Swetchine to his audience at the Sorbonne as being in the foremost rank of Christian moralists, and Jules Janin, who wrote two articles in the

Indépendance Belge which were full of deep enthusiasm.

Madame Swetchine's eyes were closed—no doubt by the mercy of Heaven—before seeing Napoleon III.'s Italian policy in its true light.

At the time of the iniquitous trial and condemnation of M. de Montalembert, shortly after the foundation of the Empire, I asked M. de Persigny how the Emperor could so forget the special kindliness he had so recently shown to M. de Montalembert. M. de Persigny answered me with his usual openness:—

"The explanation is a simple one. Prince Louis knew that there have always existed in France numerous tribes of men in black, with whose manners he was not familiar, and whose language he did not speak. A dragoman was required for accosting them and dealing with them. M. de Montalembert was naturally suited for that purpose; but in a little time the men in black grew tame and familiar; they were the first to push their interpreter on one side, and some of them pressed round the Emperor so eagerly that they overshot the mark. One day the Emperor, to use his own words, said, 'They disgust me!' From the errors of the few the Emperor drew conclusions anything but agreeable to the whole clergy."

Before entering upon this painful subject I have conscientiously asked myself whether I should not do wrong in calling up such lamentable recollections. Sincerely and conscientiously I came to the conclu-

sion that to tell the truth, here and elsewhere, is always the most useful course. It is a teacher which nothing can replace. If truth is to be withheld from the living and the dead, what realm is left to it? Where and when shall we place its wholesome action? Who would profit by an experience from which no lesson is to be drawn? What enlightenment would the future receive from the past if the light is to remain under the bushel? I am inclined to think that the majority of catastrophes have their origin in repressed complaints rather than in frankly uttered ones.

To these general considerations, which embrace all times and countries, were added special and particular motives. The same party and the same men who did homage to the flag of '89 during the Imperial reign, and to the reign which made use of it, turned against the Empire in 1871, as they had done against liberty in 1852. They passed from adulation of the Government to enthusiasm for the Ancien Régime and all its symbols, preserving only their arrogant tone and prodigality of anathemas as tokens of their identity. What recollection could do more harm to the Church than this cynical changing of sides, always coinciding as it did with a shifting of fortune, and what remedy could be opposed to it but the honest testimony of a still upright independence? Moreover, what sensible man ignores the fact that representatives of religion may betray or disfigure it without ever changing it in essence or in its power of well-doing?

This immutability throughout all ages, lifted high above human frailty, is surely one of the most striking proofs and one of the most decisive arguments in favour of its divinity? Still, one must not carry this proof or this argument too far, and it is by showing an abuse in operation that they may be corrected of it who are tempted to incur too readily the responsibility for it.

Brittany was chosen as being one of the most favourable fields for showing at once the political conquests of the Empire and the new tendencies of some eminent members of the clergy. The Bishop of Rennes consented to play this double part, and was recompensed by the elevation of his see into an archbishopric. At this period it was held by M. Brossais-Saint-Marc, a priest of exemplary virtue and of keen intellect, but more quick than reflective. He possessed all the gifts of zeal, goodness, and charity, but he had not the sense of proportion. Circumvented by skilful emissaries and indoctrinated every morning by his newspaper, the *Univers*, he took the Emperor Napoleon III. on trust for a new Charlemagne. His very qualities made this prelate a dangerous model, and I felt all the more the imprudence of his attitude and of his allocution at the doors of his cathedral because it concerned Brittany, to which so many ties united me. I therefore spoke very openly about it to one of my friends, M. de Séré, formerly member for the Ille-et-Vilaine in the Legislative Assembly.

I conceived the saddest presentiments about the

Imperial policy as soon as it gave us the singular spectacle of the Congress of Paris. Again I saw there that interested predilection for Sardinia which, in 1849, we had so much difficulty, not in overcoming, but merely in shelving in the mind of a prince who might adjourn but would never definitely abandon an idea. On the 1st of January, 1859, his real intentions came on us like a thunderclap.

On the New Year's Day reception at the Tuileries, without any provocation and to the surprise of all the diplomatic corps as well as of France, the Emperor addressed this blunt apostrophe to Baron von Hûbner, the Austrian Ambassador—

"I regret that our relations with your Government are not as good as they formerly were. But I beg you to inform your Emperor that my personal feelings towards him have not changed."

This unusual language threw the business world into such a panic that the Government found it necessary to have recourse to palliatives. The *Moniteur* of January the 7th accordingly published the following note :—

"For several days public opinion has been agitated by alarming rumours to which it is the duty of the Government to put an end by declaring that nothing in our diplomatic relations justifies the fears which these rumours tend to raise."

A month later, on February the 7th, the Emperor, opening the session of the Chambers, alluded to some differences with Austria on the banks of the Danube, and added:

"Such being the state of things, there is nothing extraordinary in France becoming more closely connected with Piedmont, so devoted to us during the late war and so faithful to our policy during peace. The happy union of my well-beloved cousin, Prince Napoleon, with the daughter of King Victor Emanuel is, therefore, not one of those isolated facts for which a hidden reason is to be sought, but the natural consequence of the community of interests of the two countries and the friendship of two sovereigns."

This was not quite a declaration of war, but it gave a glimpse of the offensive and defensive alliance. M. de Morny, President of the Legislative Body, while enthusiastically praising the Emperor's language, sought to draw a pacific interpretation from it. He said—

"Religion, philosophy, civilisation, credit, and labour have made peace the primary boon of modern society. (*Unanimous applause.*) The blood of the people is no longer shed wantonly, and war is the last resort of misunderstood right or injured honour. Most difficulties are smoothed away by diplomacy or solved by peaceful arbitration. (*Continued approval.*)"

Public opinion did not cease to pronounce for peace, while the Emperor never ceased preparing for war, and once again the Emperor's obstinacy gained the day. He crossed the Alps, and soon fell into a trap which General MacMahon changed into a victory at Magenta. The consequences of the Italian War were inevitable, although less spontaneous and extensive than Paris

and Turin flattered themselves that they would be. The South of Italy did not rise. The Grand Duke of Tuscany, the Duke of Modena, and the Duchess of Parma were expelled by foreign intervention, not by the revolt of their subjects, and the assailants found it expedient to leave Venice to Austria, while wresting from her the Milanese region. The rest of the plan was postponed.

On returning from this campaign, the Emperor gave an account of it to both Houses, and, according to his habit, gave the country a prospect of continued peace. He announced as final the federation of Italy with the Pope as chief ruler and the King of Sardinia as his "vicar." This was the term employed in the Speech from the Throne.

On various occasions I endeavoured to show, in the *Correspondant*, the tendency of what had been accomplished and the perils imminent in the future, but I did not foresee that I should have to uphold my argument with the Emperor Napoleon III. himself. It was in the Académie that the occasion for doing so arose.

My colleagues were kind enough to appoint me director for the first quarter of 1860, in order that I might have the pleasure and the honour of proclaiming the election of Père Lacordaire, which took place on the first Thursday in February.

Since its foundation, the Académie has included among its privileges that of applying for audiences of the sovereign to the first gentleman of the household instead of to a Minister, as the other State corporations

have to do. Each nomination has to be laid before the head of the State. The director of the Académie alone announces the result of the vote, without any assistance from the committee. Only the chancellor and the perpetual secretary accompany him when he goes to present the newly elected member after his reception. These usages have been carefully kept up under all forms of Government, even by Presidents of the Republic, and as soon as Père Lacordaire was elected, I had the honour of writing to the Duc de Bassano, Grand Chamberlain, to ask for the customary audience, which was granted me after a brief delay.

The Emperor Napoleon III. liked these audiences, and, knowing very well that his lightest words would be repeated in such cases, gave them a form in which he excelled if he had time to prepare his speech. In 1856, when receiving the Duc de Broglie, who on succeeding M. de Saint-Aulaire, the historian of *La Fronde*, had eulogised the 18th Brumaire, the Emperor said—

"I hope, M. le Duc, that your grandson will speak of the Second of December as you have spoken of the Eighteenth of Brumaire."

After my reception in 1857 I was presented to the Emperor by M. Brifaut, who had received me, and by the perpetual secretary Villemain. The former was beginning my presentation in the usual formal terms, when the Emperor interrupted him in a very kindly tone, saying, "Oh, I know M. de Falloux very well!" and, after a short pause, he added these evidently premedi-

tated words: "M. de Falloux, it was disorder which brought us into contact. I am sorry that order should not have united us." It occurred to me to answer, "Sire, but this is not order," but I repressed that impulse and merely said, "I have always preserved a feeling of gratitude for the President's kindness to me, which time has not effaced." The Emperor thereupon turned to M. Brifaut and complimented him upon his tragedy *Ninus II.*; and graciously dismissed us without having spoken a single word to M. Villemain. No doubt he wished him to feel that he was well aware with what inexhaustible activity the witty conversationalist manifested in the drawing-rooms his implacable opposition to the Empire.

It was in the early days of March, 1860, that I had to announce the election of Père Lacordaire to the Emperor. The new member had quitted Paris on the foundation of the Empire, but not without first delivering against despotism a virulent philippic on the text *Esto vir* from the pulpit of St. Roch's. I was prepared, therefore, for some imperial epigram. Often in my life I have failed to obey the wise maxim which bids us turn our tongue seven times in the mouth before speaking. I am more apt to speak seven times before I turned my tongue. On that day I intended firmly to maintain the Académie's choice by an easy but complete apologia of Père Lacordaire. My expectation was not fulfilled and my precaution was not needed.

I commenced with the invariable formula—

"I come to announce and present for the Emperor's sanction the election of Père Lacordaire, in succession to M. de Tocqueville."

"I sanction this election with pleasure, although I do not conceal from you that it strikes me as rather strange and not apparently made with the intention of pleasing me."

"I am at a loss to understand how this election can cause the Emperor any astonishment. The Académie has a tradition which dominates and sums up all the others, namely, to call into its ranks, when it finds them united in a high degree, the elevation of talent and the dignity of character. On both these heads nothing was more natural than the election of Père Lacordaire, and I believe I may affirm that it has been ratified by all the sound fractions of public opinion."

"Oh, I am well aware of Père Lacordaire's talent, and I say nothing against him. But we will say no more about that. I do not conceal from you that I feel the attacks made on me from all sides, by your friends and by the clergy."

"The Emperor must allow me to say that he himself raised all these questions and took all the initiatory steps. It seems to me that those he complains of merely followed him on to the ground whither he challenged them to come."

"I can understand that there should be discussion, and I admit it; but I could not expect such violent and passionate attacks."

"I fear that the Emperor confounds two quite distinct things—passion and conscience: the one often runs away with itself and almost always ends with giving way; the other never puts itself in the wrong and never yields."

"Still you cannot deny that parties are eagerly seeking to profit by present occurrences."

"Then I would say that they ought not to be given any pretext for doing so; but I repeat that your Majesty is mistaken on this point. I appeal from the Emperor to the President whether parties were in a hurry to declare war upon him. I myself was a pledge to him of the sincere desire of parties to re-establish order in France. Afterwards, when the conditions of government had been profoundly modified, a limited number of men held aloof and have never framed a wish or done an act against the prosperity of the country. But still, order and prosperity must be maintained, and that we have not seen for a long time past."

"The clergy, at least, has no grounds to complain of me, and yet it is now showing itself very ungrateful."

"The clergy has not only given proof of deference to the Empire but of an eagerness to oblige which resembles adulation, and which, I am convinced, has often astonished and perhaps scandalised the Emperor. I confine myself to mentioning the case of the Bishop of Rennes. Your Majesty certainly knows how he has shocked public opinion, to say nothing of me. Well, though I have but a poor opinion of his judg-

ment, I will not hesitate to accept him as judge between the Empire and the Papacy. I am perfectly sure that he would pronounce without hesitation in favour of the rights of the Holy See."

"But my personal difficulties are not taken into account, and I am attacked on all points as if I could do all I wish to do in the midst of so many entanglements."

"Without going back to the origin of these entanglements, it is natural that Europe should only recognise France in them and France only the Emperor."

"You are wrong. I have made many efforts, but nobody will second me. You, M. de Falloux, are free, but I am not so. The Pope is not reasonable; he is not willing to make me the smallest concession."

"And yet the documents published in England go to show that the Pope accepted all the proposals of reform, and that it was from the Ambassador of France that came the last refusal relative to the guarantees of neutrality and inviolability of territory."

"I have also to complain of the Emperor of Austria; he lost a great deal of time before carrying out the Villafranca stipulations."

"I am not in a position to answer upon matters of that nature. All I feel that I have the right to assert is, that if the Emperor had directed against the King of Sardinia a thousandth part of the efforts which he

says have been wasted upon the Sovereign Pontiff and the Emperor of Austria, all the Italian difficulties would have been over long ago."

"I repeat, M. de Falloux, that you do not consider my moral difficulties. I cannot shake myself free of them as people believe; I have always been bound to the cause of Italy, and it is impossible for me to turn my guns upon her."

"After directing the guns on Solferino, there is no need to level them at anybody again; your intentions once manifested clearly and firmly, they will be listened to by everybody."

"Do not think that. Be sure that the moral difficulties are greater than you imagine, and the true way of emerging from the peril was to discuss with moderation and yield to the ideas of compromise."

"In my turn I must repeat that no one has the intention or wish to be other than moderate, but in none of the plans put forward up to date has there been manifest the least element of acceptable compromise. Does the Emperor discern anything of a compromise in the ideas embodied in the pamphlet which he allowed to be published last December? Does he regard the plan of the papal vicar, proposed in the speech of the day before yesterday, as a workable one? The Emperor certainly cannot fail to be aware that there is often much trouble in getting a priest and his curate to get on together. I venture to ask the Emperor himself how long he calculates the

Pope could live with the vicar he intends to give him?"

To these words he replied with vivacity—

"Yes, I agree that this cannot work."

"Well, sire, this is just what we say. If the Emperor holds this view of the proposals contained in the Speech from the Throne, what is left for public opinion to go by, and how can the Emperor reproach us for not entering into reasonable compromises?"

"But I might, if supported, propose exchanges of territory to the Pope, for he cannot retain his own any longer."

"Exchanges of territory, sire! If you mean Jerusalem or any other part of the East, you will instantly come into collision with Russia and England. If in Italy, how can you give the Pope territory not wrested from another—from the King of Naples, for instance—and how could he consent without protest as the Pope himself would do? I confess that I see in this solely the commencement of new and inextricable difficulties, not the smoothing of the present ones."

"Such affairs might be regulated by a Congress."

"But the Emperor, by the pamphlet which he authorised to appear, seemed bent on making the Congress impossible."

"Well, that can be settled between the Sovereigns."

"But it is the Sovereigns above all who have most interest in causing their rights to be respected!" There was a pause. "Let the Emperor allow me to

tell him that the only practical solution would be for him to stop, and, what is more, to retrace his steps along the fatal path on which he has entered, one as full of perils for himself as for France."

"Yes, I know that my dynasty and my son's future are said to be at stake, but I cannot stop for them. M. de Falloux, you know better than anybody that in making the Roman expedition I never gave a pledge to preserve the States of the Church to the Pope in spite of his subjects. No one can require that of me, and the Pope cannot keep his States by himself. This is the truth!" These latter words were uttered with much animation. I replied—

"What I hear from the Emperor's lips reminds me of the words of a man whom the President thought a great deal of. Donoso Cortès said to me in 1851, 'We are witnessing the Ghosts' Review—we see the ghost of the Republic; we are about to see that of the Empire; but God grant we may never see the ghost of the persecutions of the Church. I cannot understand how the shade of Pius VII. is not enough to arrest the Emperor on his course.'"

"There will be no persecution; there never will be any in my reign. You know my sentiments regarding Pius IX.; they have not changed, and they never will."

"Sire, no will can guarantee that; there is no halt possible on the road along which the Emperor has been moving for a year. He has changed the base of his dynasty; after having placed it upon the centre

of the Conservative party, he allowed it to be transferred to the pit of a melodramatic theatre.* The Emperor has done me the honour to speak of his son; his future is henceforth at the mercy of the revolutionary party."

"I do not entertain the illusions you imagine, and I know all about the revolutionary party."

"Ten years ago I heard from the President's lips these words, 'The name of Napoleon disciplines the masses!' I readily allow that it may make them fall into line and stir them by an appeal to popular suffrage, but when the question is how to repress and subdue the ardour and greediness which have been so much excited for the last year, that name loses its spell, and society may in consequence perish." There was another silence. "The Emperor recently said at Bordeaux, 'What shall I leave behind me in Rome—order or terror?' Now the Emperor may put the same query to himself about Paris—asking what he will leave behind him here; the story of all our revolutions will answer him."

"I do not live in a fog, as you suppose; I have my eyes open to the danger."

"Perchance the Emperor believes that the English alliance may serve as a counterpoise, but I must confess that this does not inspire me with any confidence.

* At that time, in the Porte Saint-Martin Theatre, was being performed a drama entitled *La Tireuse des Cartes* (Anglicé, *The Woman in Red*), written by Mocquart, the Emperor's secretary. In this Pius IX. was directly insulted. It was founded on "the Mortara Case" of a Jewish Roman Catholic convert.

The English alliance, from the dynastic point of view, is no more favourable than the revolutionary alliance."

"I know that very well. England never is a true ally; she is even an enemy [this was said with some bitterness]. She spoils everything she touches. But I repeat to you, M. de Falloux, my difficulties are of all kinds, and no one will take them into account."

As these words, upon which he placed marked emphasis, brought the conversation round to its starting point, it appeared to me that the conversation was exhausted, so I bowed to the Emperor without waiting for any formal hint, and said—

"For a year the Emperor did me the honour of testifying esteem for me. I am sure that he would have changed his opinion of me if I had spoken out with less frankness. Therefore I venture to entreat him not to cherish any illusion on the subject he has so kindly discussed with me. This is not a struggle with passions or with parties which is beginning, but one with conscience, and the resistance will be invincible."

"I have been glad to see you and hear what you have to say."

Thereupon he shook me by the hand with some little affection upon my withdrawing. In the course of this long interview the Emperor appeared oppressed by an evident melancholy. He could scarcely conceal the painful docility with which he submitted to the secret difficulties which he invoked as the excuse for his policy.

On leaving the Tuileries I went to the house on the Quai Voltaire, where Count Anatole Lemercier, a deputy in the *Corps Legislatif*, was then residing. I found his colleague, M. Keller, with him. Though they had both rallied to the Empire, they were yet faithful and ardent defenders of the Holy See. My Académie uniform told them where I had been, and on seeing me enter they both exclaimed :—

"Well, what took place between the Emperor and yourself?"

"Something so unexpected," I replied, "that I want to know to what degree I am to make it public. But I do not hesitate at once to give you this formal advice : redouble your vigilance in religious matters, and do not attach too much value to the solution solemnly announced to you in the Imperial speech. While the Emperor was speaking to me the head of Orsini appeared above his own, and we have to deal with Orsini at least as much as with Napoleon III."

My wife's state of health had determined me to spend the winter of 1860 where good medical attendance was to be had, and I selected Versailles as a place where I could get a house and gardens on terms less extravagant than I could have done in Paris. I returned there on that day much perplexed. I had only been received at the palace as the representative of the Académie, and according to custom I should have to make a report of my audience at the next week's meeting. I had only to record the brief remarks exchanged as regarded Père Lacordaire, since all the rest was solely

addressed to the ex-Minister of the President. This summary report having been submitted to my colleagues, I abstained from repeating the whole conversation to either the Académie or the outside world.

Still the substance remained, and two points stood out in a very clear light. The Emperor did not take in earnest the diplomatic movements with which he amused France and Europe, in order to gain time and prepare the ground for as yet unacknowledged designs. These designs were half-natural, half-imposed, and, with more or less repugnance, he would go as far as the pledges he had made in youth might require. When Mirabeau received two millions from Louis XVI., Count de la Marck said, "He has not sold himself, but he makes them pay to be of his way of thinking." Here the same situation was renewed in a reverse sense, and Napoleon III. might say, "I am not going to have Italians assassinate me in honour of the Pope's temporal power, when I completely share their opinion on the matter." However this may be, the doubts which I never felt as to the Emperor's political tendencies were less permissible than ever. I had already spoken of them publicly, and as no duty imposed silence upon me in regard to matters where information might be of service, I made a careful memorandum of my conversation at the Tuileries, while still fresh in my memory, and cast about for the best means of transmitting it to the Pope. The regular intermediary would have been Cardinal Morlot, Archbishop of Paris; but I had re-

cently had an experience of his disposition which was not encouraging. I had written from Versailles to him asking him on what day I should be sure of finding him at home, explaining that I took this precaution because I seldom came to Paris, and always took back with me some fresh neuralgic pains—a certain suffering which I only liked to brave for a certain gain. I received the following reply immediately :—

"Archbishopic of Paris,

"Paris, Saturday, 7th Jan., 1860.

"Monsieur le Comte,

"I intend going to Versailles on Monday for some New Year's visits. I shall not fail to present myself at your residence. I wish also to avoid giving you the trouble of coming to me in Paris, when your health requires attention. If I do not come, it will be because I am detained by exceptional occupations. Tuesday is a Council day, but the next day, Wednesday, I see nothing to prevent me being at home from twelve to two.

"Like yourself, M. le Comte, I am well aware of the gravity of the situation. It is the object of my most serious reflections before God and my conscience. But I am extremely anxious to preserve my liberty of action. Action, in either sense, has the drawback of being known to the public and becoming a text for all sorts of surmises. Such action also excites very embarrassing reaction. Thus, for instance, a short time back, having had an interview with several excellent persons for whom I profess the greatest esteem and peculiar confidences, other no less estimable persons came the next day to see me, very much concerned about the interview of the previous day and its possible consequences as regarded myself. Being reluctant to pledge myself in either sense, I did the best I could to keep out of it, for I do not wish my conduct to be attributed to such or such influences.

"Monsieur le Comte, kindly accept, with my most sincere wishes, the renewed assurance of my most respectful devotion.

"F. M., Cardinal Archbishop of Paris."

The perusal of this letter caused me the most pain-

ful surprise. I communicated it confidentially to M. Berryer and asked him for his opinion. He said, "I can understand what makes a man think thus, but not what can make him put it in black and white."

The "excellent persons" mentioned by the Cardinal were MM. Cochin and de Melun, who by arrangement with me, and moved by the same feelings as myself, had desired to have an interview with his Eminence. The "other persons no less respectable" were representatives of the Government and its policy. "The desire to preserve liberty of action in one sense or another" signified to remain free between the just and the unjust.

Needless to say that the Cardinal did not come to Versailles on Monday, and that I thought it useless to inflict on him my evidently inopportune visit.

Upon the death of the Archbishop, M. Foisset sent a highly eulogistic article about him to the *Correspondant*, and I did not object to its insertion. Cardinal Morlot had real virtues to which it was always right to render homage; but they often degenerated into weaknesses. Hence I abandoned the idea of taking him as an intermediary, and looked about me for some one going to Rome who would hand my letter directly to the Holy Father. I soon found some one eminently suited for the mission, and it was M. de la Rochefoucauld, Duc de Bisaccia.

At the approach of the dangers which threatened the temporal power, he and his brother, the Duc de Doudeauville, conceived the idea of a grand crusade

embracing Spain and Italy, and appealing to all the countries of Christendom. They further offered to take to Rome and to maintain five hundred soldiers there for two years at their own expense.

The two brothers left Paris about the end of March, 1860. Their proposals were not accepted in their entirety. But anxious to leave the Pope a token of their generous intentions, they brought to Rome two batteries of field artillery, some mortars, and a considerable sum for Peter's pence, of which they were the first organisers.

In the different audiences which they had with the Holy Father, the Duc de Bisaccia told him the story of my audience at the Tuileries, adding that he was prepared to supply any further particulars. The Pope, on opening the missive, replied that he had some difficulty in reading my writing, adding, "Still, I see that he has been careful over it." M. de la Rochefoucauld then read it out to him. "At every sentence," he afterwards wrote to me, "the Holy Father stopped me to make reflections on the meaning of M. de Falloux's replies to the Emperor." To the accusations from Napoleon III., he retorted, "Poor Pope! He is ever accused and nothing is proposed to him. Can I take my neighbours' goods? Nothing reasonable has ever been suggested to me. He fears the revolutionists' dagger, that is what makes him act in this way!" On coming to the passage about the Bishop of Rennes, he said, "He has heartily repented of it since, and has written me to that effect." On the whole, the

Holy Father appeared convinced that the Emperor was generally lacking in sincerity, and M. de la Rochefoucauld came away from the audience convinced that Pius IX. was firmly resolved to yield nothing. A few days afterwards the Pope appointed General de la Moricière generalissimo of the small Pontifical army, notwithstanding the great efforts of the Ambassador of France to the contrary.

From this date I wondered, as still I do, what the Emperor's motive could be in making me, sincerely or not, the apparent confidant of his ideas about Italy. Did he think that I was convinced of the necessity of the meditated spoliation? Did he merely wish to let me see the yoke which weighed upon him, and did he fancy this avowal would exonerate him? Did he involuntarily show me more of his mind than he intended doing? Did he obey one of those instincts of truthfulness which still cling to those who are the most given to duplicity? I cannot say; but I quite understood that his mind was made up to follow out to the end what he believed to be his duty to Italy, and in this at all events I am sure that I am not mistaken.

CHAPTER IX.

PERIL OF THE HOLY SEE.—THE CONDUCT OF THE CATHOLICS.

1860.

On the 18th of March, 1860, General Bedeau received the following letter from General de la Moricière:—

"Dear Friend,

"I more and more deplore not having met you at Nantes, and I am sorry I cannot now go and see you. I have requested my wife—or one of our mutual friends, if my wife cannot go to Nantes—to tell you the course I have taken. I truly have trust in God alone, for, from what I know, human strength is not equal to the work I am undertaking.

"Adieu. I start in a quarter of an hour, and I must answer 'to our next happy meeting' to those who do not yet know whither I am going.

"La Moricière."

This letter announced, in true and simple terms, one of the greatest deeds of abnegation in our age. La Moricière, in the enjoyment of the highest military renown and great popularity as a Liberal, sacrificed both for an enterprise about which he cherished no illusion. Monsignor de Mérode, a kinsman of

Madame de la Moricière and Minister of War at Rome, came to France in person with the appeal of Pius IX. The general did not hesitate for an instant. Cool reflection would have counselled a refusal, but faith and honour, which admit of no objections, pointed to him the sacrifice, which he accepted without hesitation.

It was a grand example. Many Catholics of various ages and professions were as ready to serve under La Moricière as he had been to take service under the Pope. Anjou did not fall short of what might have been expected of her. Count Theodore de Quatrebarbes, though close on sixty, set off at once, followed by several of his nephews; Roger de Terves, Joseph de la Perraudière, and Henri de la Salmonière, all three young neighbours of mine, lost no time in joining him.

Another of my neighbours, Viscount Jean des Cars, resolved to follow them. He had often repeated, "Their small number does honour to them and is a reflection upon us." But he was already father of four children, to which would soon be added a fifth, and he could not risk the danger of bidding his wife farewell until anxiety had passed. In the short interval during which he had to wait he had so bad a fall from his horse that the peasants who picked him up took him in an unconscious state to the Château La Morosière, where he expired in a few hours. What more striking example of the inanity of human intentions and the mysterious decrees of Providence!

Nothing was more natural and justifiable than the brief delay consecrated by M. des Cars to the best warranted affection, and yet had he departed when he first made up his mind his heroic devotion might have secured the continuance of the pure Christian happiness so dolefully wrecked by his tragic death.

Pius IX. was blamed by a large section of his Court for having appealed to General la Moricière, and the General met with the most opposite receptions in the different ranks of the Roman hierarchy. Monsignor de Mérode and his friends were all fire; Cardinal Antonelli and the subordinates who could read the Papal Premier's thoughts were all ice. The same contrasts were to be observed at the news of the disaster of Castelfidardo. Pius IX. was deeply afflicted; but a French cardinal living in Rome tried, it is said, to comfort him by this very typical reflection: "The defeat of the French may be a blessing in disguise; for, with their victory, modern ideas would have triumphed and been implanted in Rome."

Before the glorious check to La Moricière, and with all the more reason after it, my friends and myself thought it our duty to keep up the struggle before public opinion which a shameful act of treason had ended on the battle-field. The *Correspondant* did its part generously in the press; but Parliament was a far more direct instrument of action, and the duty of Catholics was vigorously to back up the small

number of deputies devoted to the Church who had accepted the official candidature before the Government unmasked its hostile projects. Among these several, such as MM. Anatole Lemercier, Keller, and Kolb-Bernard, were not less distinguished by their talent than their character. The main point to be achieved was to retain their seats, and at the same time so to work as to send them recruits at the approaching elections. This could not be attained without the indispensable aid of the Legitimist party. But the Count de Chambord continued to be of opinion that the oath of allegiance to the Empire was an insurmountable barrier.

I, less than anybody else, could be under any illusion in this respect, for as far back as the summer of 1858 I knew of a very significant interview between the Count de Chambord and M. de Rességuier, then Counsellor-General for the Basses-Pyrénées and member of the Pau Town Council. He had gone to Frohsdorf with his brother Paul, and they made a note of the colloquy on coming out of the Prince's study, which, their memories being very good, was tantamount to a shorthand report.

"I know how devoted to me you are," said the Count de Chambord to M. de Rességuier, and this is why I ask you to conform to the orders I have issued and resign the elective functions you accepted in the department which you represented in the National Assembly."

"I trust Monseigneur will forgive my boldness, but I

believe that it is an absolute duty for some of us not to refuse the honest and religious populations among whom we live the assistance they demand. To do so would often be tantamount to throwing them into the arms of men who would speculate on them instead of serving them, and from whom they would receive nothing but evil lessons and bad examples. Our presence in the elective councils, whether for town or country, does not impose any conditions upon us other than those we submitted to under the July Government with Monseigneur's approval. This disinterested participation in public affairs seems to me an imperative duty if its only result were to enable us to watch over the Christian education of the people's offspring in schools and the charitable assistance to the poor at home and the sick in hospitals. I add that it is also the true interest of the Royalist party to devote itself to the defence of the great social and religious questions and to show itself capable of serving them by their experience in business and knowledge of men. The town and rural councils furnish us with the occasion, and those of us who belong to them think that, without alienating the least part of their independence, their retirement would bring about the ruin of much that is good and the return of much that is evil."

"Yes, yes, I know that this is the way your friend M. de Falloux looks upon it, and I do not thank him for it."

"Monseigneur will be pleased to allow me to exclude

M. de Falloux from this question, in which I have only taken council of my conscience. Since the Empire, he has kept aloof from all political action, and I entreat Monseigneur to continue towards him the kindly feelings he has deserved for so many services by which our cause has profited."

"I positively know that he gave that advice to many persons; but no matter. In what concerns you, will you not obey me?"

"Monseigneur puts me to a very cruel test. He obliges me to choose between a resistance painful to me beyond expression and the abandonment of useful works to which I am devoted, and which, in my profound belief, serve the monarchical cause as well as they do the moral and religious interests of the country where I reside."

"This seems so to you because you see only part of the question. I see it in its entirety and from a higher standpoint."

"If Monseigneur saw it closely I am sure he would accord me the approval which I receive from our most devoted and enlightened friends."

"So that I shall not convince you, as I have done many others,—the Duc de Maillé, for instance?"

"If I am not mistaken the Duke had some grounds for believing that he did not realise all the good he hoped to do by entering the general council of his department, and this no doubt was what induced him to come and submit the question to Monseigneur. I am not in the same uncertainty, and I should not have

ventured to provoke an order to which I had no intention of submitting."

"Then it would be better not to have come, for you oblige me to receive you badly. If I received you graciously, and you mentioned the fact, though disobeying my orders, it would have a very bad effect and be a very bad precedent. Hence I must receive you badly and refuse you, for instance, my portrait, which M. de Montbel asked me to give him for you. You must tell everybody that I received you badly."

"Monseigneur's severity makes me deeply regret the great pleasure I felt at seeing him, but he will allow me to say that I only came after having been invited by him through M. Berryer, who knew of my resolution not to break my word to the electors whom I undertook to represent. In any event, the great sorrow caused me by Monseigneur will not prevent me hoping that, in his justice, he will deal fairly with those who, however happy they would be to please him, still prefer to serve him as their conscience dictates."

"Yes, but those who obey me serve me better, and I am grateful to them, not because they please me, but because they serve me. Those who act like you do wrong by giving this Government a helping hand and an honourability—the word is a bad one, but it expresses my meaning well—which must be refused it."

"I beg Monseigneur to remark that I do not serve the present Government, however we look at the matter, either in appearance or reality. None of those who

know me, friends or adversaries, are ignorant of my devotion to Monseigneur and my inviolable attachment to his cause. Whenever dynastic questions are raised in the councils which I attend, in addresses, petitions, or otherwise, concerning the Presidency for life, the Emperor's marriage, or the Prince Imperial's birth, or any other such, I have protested and clearly given my motive for my votes against the tendency of the present Government and its dynastic pretensions."

"That does not matter. I repeat to you that I look at the matter from a higher point of view, and I cannot approve of my orders not being followed, given as they are after mature reflection. I hope that all this will soon end, for if it lasted. . . . . But we must be ready for events possibly near at hand, by which I am fully decided personally to benefit. The Princes of Orleans want to keep all the chances to themselves, but I shall be too quick for them."

"Monseigneur may rely upon my being among the first, in the events which he permits us to anticipate, to give him proof of a devotion which has never varied."

"I do so rely upon you, despite your resistance."

The Count de Chambord's tone had become much mollified towards the end of the conversation, and the last remarks were made in a particularly gracious tone, and with the hand held out in token of farewell. M. de Rességuier felt emboldened to add—

"If, as I hope, I can come to Italy this winter, will Monseigneur allow me to offer him my homage anew at Venice?"

"Yes, certainly," replied the Prince, "if you have sent in your resignation. Otherwise, no."

Nevertheless it was possible that, in the course of the grave events of 1858 and 1859, the Count de Chambord's point of view might have undergone a change. It was important to ascertain this, and for the bureau of information which the Prince kept up in Paris to be clearly instructed in the matter. So I wrote to the Marquis de la Ferté and the Count de la Ferronnays to ask them to breakfast with me at Versailles, and they were kind enough to do me that favour. From the first words of our long conference they did not conceal the fact that their instructions were to maintain the same instructions in all the departments, but they let me clearly understand that they were both willing to transmit any observations in a contrary sense to Frohsdorf. Thereupon I developed with the ardour which never forsook me in such matters the following argument—

"There was reason to believe, and for my part I did believe to a certain point, that the Empire would not last long, and that it would startle and disturb France by the incoherency of its policy, as it would alarm Europe. The contrary has happened. France is so fond of repose that she surrenders herself to any one who procures it for her, without being very particular about the terms or the solidity of the settlement. Europe is not any more foresighted or any prouder. Therefore the Count de Chambord should acknowledge now that he was wrong in isolating his party within

the nation. But there is often a wide chasm between seeing an error and admitting that one sees it. Moreover, it might be dangerous for a Prince to go back on his judgment; this making it doubly his duty to look twice before he leaps. The dilemma would be a serious one, therefore, if present circumstances did not concur to furnish the opportunity for a change which will seem neither a confession nor repentance. Would it not be simple and noble for the Count de Chambord to let you use to his friends a language akin to this: 'So long as questions were purely political I believed it right to hold and to give my opinion, but now that the questions are all religious each man must act as his conscience directs him.' "

"Mark well," I said to my interlocutors, who whilst maintaining their official reserve, did not discourage me, "the Count de Chambord will by the same act acquire a multitude of advantages into the bargain. The present situation having been created without us and despite us, how can the Prince fail to see the magnificent part which falls to the lot of his party? His friends stand in the foremost rank of the champions of religious liberty and the regeneration of political liberty, and if we manage thus to prevent Italian unity—which is tantamount to the creation of a nationality twenty-five millions strong on our frontier—God alone knows from what imminent woes we may preserve France. What I ask of the Count de Chambord through you is so manifestly advantageous that many men who do not feel our sincerity of conviction have already seized on

it. If you let M. Thiers and his friends appear alone in Parliament as champions of religious liberty and parliamentary prerogatives you put a political lever in their hands which they will use without you, and perhaps against you. Do not therefore lose an hour in warning and alarming the Count de Chambord on this subject. Never will conscience have spoken in language more in conformity with that of adroitness, and the blindness that would misapprehend them both would be inexplicable."

My guests promised me that my observations should be the subject of a most faithful report to the Prince at the surest and earliest opportunity. This promise was given in such a tone of sympathy that I could not doubt its punctual execution. Unfortunately, this step did not succeed, nor did others, and the orders were not modified. Later on, M. Thiers, as it was easy to foretell, resolved to enter the House. Thereupon M. Berryer announced a similar intention, but he was at once the butt for all kinds of annoyances. For the moment he gave way, but, unable any longer to bear the reproach of his patriotism, he disregarded them, and, offering himself as a candidate at the eleventh hour, was once again elected and acclaimed by the city of Marseilles.

During my stay at Versailles I had consulted physicians about my neuralgic torture. They advised the St. Gervais waters in Savoy. I went there, and met an old friend, the Duc de Maillé. Both of us had equally at heart the interests of France and of the

Church. We talked them over with equal warmth, and were lamenting in unison over the state of things, when we learnt that the Count de Chambord was coming to stay a few weeks in Switzerland. He had fixed his principal residence at Lucerne, and was to receive there many French visitors. The Duke immediately suggested our interrupting our St. Gervais cure for a few days, offering to pay me every attention on the road. I answered that I should be bound to repeat at Lucerne the language which I had previously used—a language which had evidently not succeeded, as nothing had come of it. M. de Maillé replied that events had come to my aid since the winter, that my journey would have good effect on the Prince, who had many times complained in kindly terms of my complete retirement; that, lastly, there was always a great difference between a conversation, however faithfully repeated, and the direct exchange of ideas. This was true enough; so, though I never addressed the Count de Chambord without deep emotion, I gave way, and we started off at once.

Advised by M. de Maillé, the Prince was good enough to let me know at the railway station that rooms were ready for me at his hotel; and I had hardly arrived there before the Duc de Lévis called upon me, and showed by his kindly manner that he did not remember our differences in 1852. The Count de Chambord's reception of me was in keeping with this pleasant preliminary. Introduced that same day into his study by M. de la Ferté, our meeting was of

perfect cordiality on the Prince's part and the most respectful gratitude on mine. Nevertheless, I expressed my views very frankly, and they were listened to without any sign of discontent. I did not venture to ask for an immediate and categorical answer.

The Count showed that he was gratified by this discretion, and that I rather gained than lost by it. The Duchess of Parma, who had accompanied her brother, was also anxious to talk to me and hear news of France. She particularly inquired about M. de Lamartine. She expressed, on all subjects, elevated sentiments entirely in conformity with those of the Count de Chambord, from whom she never liked to differ in any way, from affection as well as from a sense of dignity. Still, she told me one day that her brother was very well satisfied with me, and that I should certainly have reason to congratulate myself on having taken this journey. All that I saw at Lucerne was gracious and touching. I felt deep emotion when I heard the mass in the little chapel consecrated to the Swiss who fell on the 10th of August, opposite Thorwaldsen's Lion.

When I took leave, the Count de Chambord did me the honour of embracing me, and, as his parting word, said, "May we meet again in France!"

I then went back to St. Gervais with the Duc de Maillé, to complete my cure.

On my return to Bourg d'Iré, I resumed the defence of the Holy See to the best of my ability by publishing in the *Correspondant* some articles which were after-

wards issued in a volume under the title of "*Itinéraire de Turin à Rome.*" In fact, the march of the sacrilegious invasion might be followed step by step, and, from its outset to its consummation none of us failed in our duty of offering our protests at each step. M. de Montalembert was prosecuted in the courts and threatened with the application of the law on general safety; the Bishop of Orleans never left the breach for a single day; and it was to this holy cause that Père Lacordaire, though his latest hour was, alas! at hand, consecrated his final efforts. The Prince de Broglie rivalled his new friends in zeal, and Augustin Cochin, travelling in Italy in 1862, sent us from Porto d'Anzio the relation of a day spent with Pius IX., whom he described as greeting with the same fatherly kindness the Roman princes and the coast fishermen, and thus recalling, without any premeditation, under its truest and most touching traits, the unalterable character of the Papacy through eighteen centuries.

But it was not enough that there should be Frenchmen in France to attack and to defend the Chair of St. Peter; there was division even in the defence, and the *Correspondant* saw peril in the very place where the *Univers* saw safety. In the two camps of Catholicism, both regarded as questions of life and death the wrangles which divided us. We could, therefore, no more keep the matter secret in Rome than in Paris.

Early in 1856, one of our most valued friends, M. Sauzet, went, in our name as well as his own, to convey our apprehensions and our homage to the feet of

Pius IX. M. Sauzet had all the requisites favourable to success. His private life was of rare dignity. In a few years he had lost four sons, all of whom had reached the age of manhood. Madame Sauzet and himself found strength and courage in their fervent piety. They had become inaccessible to purely human ambition, and were so much the more free and strong for all the struggles and duties of conscience. Outside of his oratory, M. Sauzet was nowhere so much at home as in his study, where he composed several works which merited in the same degree the attention of Rome, whether from the lay or the religious point of view. It follows that we could not have chosen a fitter ambassador, and we asked him to serve as our special interpreter to Pius IX. He promised me a faithful account of his audiences, and that he kept his word may be seen by the annexed missive :—

"Rome, 9th February, 1856.

"Dear and honoured Friend,

"I am very slow in writing to you, but I had not forgotten you or the common interests so dear to us. I have had two lengthy conferences with Cardinal Antonelli, who appeared to me to attach the highest value to your letter as to everything which comes from you. I have also had long conversations with many distinguished personages, notably the generals of important orders. I painted to them in lively colours the injury done the Church by the exaggerations of the religious press, and I found them, in general, very sympathetic towards the cause of wisdom and moderation. Numerous, thoroughpaced, and powerful as may be the supporters of the *Univers* here, superior minds are more alive than might be imagined to the drawbacks of that exclusive and provocative attitude which divides the faithful. It seemed to me proper and useful thus to pave the way to the

audience I was awaiting with the Holy Father. This audience, retarded by different causes, took place on the day before yesterday, and lasted at least an hour. The better to enable you to grasp the particulars, I shall reproduce as faithfully as I can the summary of my speech and the Holy Father's replies. I risk being diffuse, but I will try to be complete.

"I began by fulfilling Queen Amelie's charge to entreat his august prayers for her. The Holy Father spoke to me of her in touching and almost respectful terms. She reminded him of Job's prayer by her trials and admirable virtues. He then went on to discourse very confidentially of his solicitude about the Piedmont matters, and gave me an opportunity to relate in a few words what happened in Turin between Signor Cavour and myself, of which you recently had my account. Next we came to the great concerns of the Church in France and, after some words on grave questions independent of the state of the religious press, the conversation became animated on this point, with regard to which he authorised me to tell him just what I thought.

"As well as I can remember, my language was in substance as follows:—

"I have neither the inclination nor the authority to treat of questions the appreciation of which appertains to the pontiffs of the Church or eminent Catholics who have done her illustrious service. Still we have to do with publications edited and read by the laity, and the current opinion in which men of the time are the most deeply mingled must be taken into account. A simple and modest member of the flock, I owe the Holy See the tribute of my reflections and experience. I can hardly regard myself, as the Holy Father in his benevolence has been pleased to say, as the advocate of such a cause, represented in France with much more brilliancy and authority than my efforts can bring to bear on it. Still, being in Rome and called upon to express my views as to the religious press of my country, and particularly upon that part of it which, from its daily circulation, possesses such great influence, I shall do so with the candour of a witness and the convictions of a Catholic wholly devoted to the Holy Chair. I shall try to be impartial and the task will be easy, for I do not feel any passionate prejudice against the *Univers*. It has treated me politely as an individual, and my latter writings with a good-will which was not devoid of courage, as they

attacked an important decree of the ruling powers about the magistracy. As a politician, I may have the right to complain of it, but I have neither the wish nor the interest to do so.

"The *Univers* scandalises the weak, disquiets the timid, discourages those who lately joined us, repels the waverers, irritates the uncertain, and changes the indifferent into adversaries and the adversaries into enemies. It presents the Church under harsh and unbending colours. It starts the most venturesome questions, emits the most trenchant and repulsive opinions, and does not set them forth as mere opinions but as creeds. It ejects out of the Church those who do not take up its war-cry to the last extremity, and often declares that none are Catholics unless they are in its camp and rally to its standard. Thus it dwarfs religion to the proportions of a coterie. This is how the *Univers* understands moderation. As for science, the natural ally of religion, which has brought to it so many elevated souls and still wins over Protestant ministers of high standing, the *Univers* treats it with distrust and hostility. Its polemic against the rights of reason is well known, as are its hatred for philosophy, its excommunication of the great models of classical literature ever so dear to popular taste. It wages systematic war on all the institutions of present times—one day on the bar, another on trade, another on all our laws. It assails not the abuses of industrialism, but industry itself; not the failings of philosophy but often philosophy itself. Intentionally or not, it poses as the antagonist of the age. It vents curses upon it instead of directing it, and to make an enemy of one's time is not the way to influence it.

"As to the independence of the Church as regards the ruling power, let us compare the principles of all time and the attitude of the *Univers*.

"The Church accommodates herself to all constitutions and dynasties. Revolutions come and go, but she remains. She preaches submission to the laws and respect for power; she shows herself well disposed towards powers which act similarly towards her, but she never links herself to persons or systems. She is a stranger to party strife, in order that she may put a curb upon the vanquishers and be the consolation of the vanquished. There are three things which she never does: she never bows down to human grandeur, but only before God; she never insults fallen greatness, for she knows that thus she would fail in respect for present and for the past, as well as in foresight. In our

mutable times, the past so often becomes the future in the twinkling of an eye. Lastly, she never proscribes any form of government, inasmuch as it is incumbent upon her to live with them all and outlive them all.

"Now what does the *Univers* do? It adulates the party of the day, casts insult on exiled royalty, and anathema on all forms of government save absolute power, without curb and restraint. It seems that faith in despotism and its present incarnation cannot be separated from religious faith.

"Such is the course of the *Univers*. No astonishment can be felt at the repulsion which it excites on all sides in public opinion. Hence it has grown so unpopular that it injures that which it defends, and involuntarily helps that which it attacks!

"My august listener had testified his desire to hear all that I had to say. He had listened with sustained attention and marked kindness. He had the goodness to tell me that he had no fault to find with my tone, and that it did not appear to bear the impress of either personal feeling or party spite. He deigned to acknowledge that my language had kept clear of politics and was inspired by sincere devotion to the Church and the Holy See.

"After this observation on my intentions, he declared that the *Univers* was in no wise his organ, that he did not inspire it and was not answerable for it; that he had said so to all who mentioned the matter; that he would say so to any who asked him; that if a bishop should write to him he would not shrink from telling him that the *Univers* was not his journal and that all its remarks must be credited to its staff. He added that he had stated this so plainly that his ideas must be widely known, and that I might repeat this positive declaration to the friends I had named to him, whose character and services he particularly held in consideration. He ended by saying that ready as he was to answer when questioned he did not deem it proper or natural to take the initiative, as if he had anything to explain away; that he would be delighted if a way could be pointed out of cutting the Gordian knot, but that for his past he could only persist in the assurance he had already given and was eager to repeat, that the *Univers* did not represent him and was not his organ.

"I replied by thanking him for his goodness and for his assurances, which I should not fail to communicate to my friends, who would be very gratified, but that we all had too much respect to

throw into the arena of publicity words so august, which the most loyal and faithful memory might involuntarily repeat inaccurately, and thus lay itself open to the reproach we address to others of pretending to speak in the name of the Church. I added that it was public opinion which needed disabusing, as it was this public opinion which considered the *Univers* as the organ of the Holy See, and it was for the Holy See alone to enlighten it by disclaiming a connection so compromising for the interests of the Church.

"Thus my task was fulfilled. As for the means of execution, I conferred with Cardinal Antonelli upon this point. Hence I had not to repeat them, the less so as the Cardinal had certainly considered the subject, nor to specify other means, the very mention of which might render them more difficult of acceptance. It seemed to me at once more useful and respectful to insist only on the necessity of a manifestation, and leave the form entirely to the Holy Father's wisdom.

"I therefore said, as was evident enough, that it was for him alone to determine the manner of the necessary act; that several, no doubt, could be suggested, but that the Holy See would find some more easily and appreciate their value more sagaciously than any one else. The Pope alone knows all the traditions, habits, and customs of the Roman Court; he alone is placed high enough to properly estimate the situation of individuals, the necessity of things, and the interests of the Church; so to his indefatigable zeal and his high prudence the matter should be left, after the sincere and respectful appeal just addressed to him.

"The Holy Father then told me that he had heard and understood me, and that it was his duty now to meditate and entreat of God the wisdom needed to find the occasion and means of speaking, if necessary, in the language becoming a Pope.

"I have no need to tell you of all the efforts which are going on and will be continued here and elsewhere in a contrary sense. As an individual Catholic, without a mission or authority, I am little fitted to struggle against pressing and continuous action. Still I shall be on the watch, as well as I can, for I have the consciousness of having carried out an unsought-for duty without bitterness. I will write you what I learn anew, and my brother will do the same. Be kind enough also to send us news of yourself. My greatest consolation is in defending such a cause with such friends. I often like to look back in fancy to the dear manor of

Bourg d'Iré. Be good enough to remember me to every one. In particular present my cordial homage to Madame de Falloux, and rely always on the feelings which you know that I entertain for you.

"Yours in all things,

"SAUZET."

I have already disclaimed any feeling of rancour, and I renew the disclaimer here in all sincerity. Rancour is the small change of hate, which I no more understand in the bar than in small coin. Besides, I am writing at a long interval of time from the events referred to; at an age when the mirage and resentment of politics have lost their sway. Old age does not bring infallibility, but at least it should give impartiality. On approaching the termination of life there is no longer anything to be gained by deceiving others, and it is our interest not to deceive ourselves. The nearer I get to old age, that is to say to experience, the more convinced I am that the impulsion given by the *Univers* and its clique to the clergy and laity, and the yoke which it put upon them, by the seducing effect of talent as well as by the terror of its methods, have put back perhaps a full century progress which had, for fifteen or twenty years before, made giant strides.

It is in this profound belief that I have deemed it my duty to set down from place to place in these *Memoirs* some of the remembrances which may light up the road followed in the past and show the reefs to be avoided in the future.

CHAPTER X.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE COUNT DE CHAMBORD.

1861.

The Emperor Napoleon III. boasted of having an extremely sharp ear politically, and of being able to catch without fail, upon the height to which Providence had raised him, the mutterings of public opinion even when most carefully dissembled. The truth is, he was very attentive and intelligent in this respect. He did not like to give up despotism, but he devoted a great deal of consideration as to how he could prevent the yoke being too heavy, and he improvised the decrees of November, 1860, at a time when his counsellors were far from urging him to such a course.*

It surprised and even disquieted a good number of them. As for the politicians who had been the victims of the 2nd of December, it could neither conciliate nor

* These decrees slightly modified the 1852 Constitution, and established that the two Chambers should vote an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne at the opening of every session.

reassure them; still they thought that this was a commencement of restitution of public rights which ought to be encouraged; they wished without ostentation to provide a ground on which parties could meet without fuss, and peaceably discuss the successive means of consolidating or turning to the common benefit the first tendencies of imperial liberalism.

Count Daru, with never-slackening devotion, offered his house for meetings, and friends who fell into the habit of gathering there gave this parliamentary trysting-place the name of the "Daru Réunion." One of the first to be invited was naturally M. Berryer, and the same honour was paid me, though I was such an absentee.

M. Berryer reported all these facts to the Count de Chambord, who expressed his satisfaction, and the return of the Duc de Lévis to Paris, in the winter of 1861, was awaited in order to confirm him in these favourable impressions. The Duke arrived, indeed, but he showed more than his usual coolness towards M. Berryer, spoke of the Count de Chambord's perseverance in the abstentionist programme, accepted an appointment to talk the matter over with the Duc de Noailles, showed himself more imperious than could have been foreseen, and on quitting us sent to the Royalist offices in the country the most imperative instructions of the most restrictive nature.

M. Berryer determined to write plainly and directly to the Count de Chambord, and pressed me to do the same. I consented, although with regret, for I

believed in success less than he did; but I determined to make the attempt for the very reason of the optimism which M. Berryer could never shake off when speaking of the Prince, for whom he entertained a passionate worship. I did not show my letter beforehand to M. Berryer, the reason for which I explained to him in the following note :—

"Thursday, June 7th, 1861.

"My very dear Friend,

"Herewith please find a copy of my enormous *factum*. In reading it you will understand why I did not consult you. One can never do that in safety when writing of you. The more I reflect, the better I am persuaded that the highest service which we can render M. le Comte de Chambord is to offer an invincible resistance to the illusions in which he has long been lulled to rest, and with which he is drawn into an attitude which you so justly characterised in recalling the Polignac policy.

"For the Duc de Lévis I had the five or six opening pages copied—I mean all concerning the two interviews with him—so that he may make his own additions or rectifications as far as he sees fit. He acknowledged it by return post in curt and cold though most polite terms.

"With all my heart, yours,

"Falloux."

My letter to the Count de Chambord was couched as follows :—

"Paris, June 3rd, 1861.

"Monseigneur,

"I have hesitated a long while ere writing this letter; in no way did I feel authorised to raise this serious question before you, and yet I cannot overcome an invincible regret at the thought of the mistakes which might spring up anew between your judgment and mine. I feel positively afraid of falling short in the gratitude I owe to Lucerne,* and the encouragement Mon-

* See my visit to Lucerne, preceding chapter.

seigneur grants to every truth, proffered more or less opportunely, if prompted by the conscience or by a feeling of devotion. I prefer, therefore, to be reproached rather for importunity than ingratitude, and I offer here, in all simplicity, my heart's innermost thoughts and deepest-rooted beliefs.

"On arriving in Paris this spring, I was informed by M. Berryer of letters he had addressed to Monseigneur, of those of the Vicomte de Saint-Priest, and of another gentleman whose military judgment and ardour find new scope on the field opened up by the decrees of the 24th of November.*

"By Monseigneur's replies I gathered that the question was under consideration, and would be thoroughly studied until more light had been shed on the situation. For my part I have been awaiting this period without any impatience and without taking any action.

"Great, then, was my surprise, when, a month ago, the gentleman who is in correspondence with the Vicomte de Saint-Priest called on me, and with much emotion stated that the Duc de Lévis, arriving over night, had brought precise and formal resolutions in Monseigneur's name, which admitted of no deliberation, although they appeared radically impracticable to him.

"Upon this I instantly demanded an interview with the Duc de Lévis, which he kindly granted me for the next day.

"I told him plainly that I came, in M. Berryer's absence, to endeavour to shake the security which he had shown to the gentleman whose name I gave and in any case to disguise nothing of the effect of the conversation. The Duc having declared to me that his course was already irrevocably shaped, I then asked his permission to discuss it and to point out the innumerable drawbacks, as they appeared to me.

"In the first place I set myself to establish the fact that none of us had ever asked Monseigneur to revoke a decision or contradict himself, but merely to use some such language as this—

"'When questions were solely political, I asserted my right to judge them as a sovereign. I should do so still, and I continue to believe that those who think otherwise than I do are mistaken. But now that questions have become principally if not solely religious, I decline to put myself forward as supreme arbitrator,

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* General Changarnier.

and, without dissimulating what course I prefer, I leave my friends full liberty to follow the impulse of their conscience.'

"'Remark,' I said to the Duc de Lévis, 'that we do not ask Monseigneur for a counsel or direction repugnant to him, but purely and simply our freedom. It is probable that we should only make a very limited use of it. and I cherish no illusions as to our probable success. But the principle itself of this freedom is indispensable to us from the point of view of conscience above all, and from that of politics in order to free Monseigneur from the responsibilities of incalculable range.'

"'Remark, too,' I furthermore added, 'what would be the moral position of Monseigneur if he said to the justly alarmed clergy, justly concerned as to the threats rising on the horizon, "I refuse you my friends for the defence of the interests so dear to you," and saying to the country, "You commence a new birth under representative government, but I do not wish my friends to take a share in this awakening of liberty and to aid it by their concurrence."'

"Looking at the prejudice still existing in so many minds, at the ease with which such a feeling can be speculated upon, one cannot dissemble the fact that the inevitable result will be to turn towards the Empire the clergy, who were beginning to perceive the abyss, and towards the Comte de Paris all those who cling more or less tightly to representative traditions.

"The Duc de Lévis having stated that no fear was felt on this subject as regarded the Orleans family, I answered him that I had felt much greater apprehensions, justified by many facts, that assuredly when Orleanists and Legitimists mutually abstained in common, as they had done for the last ten years, the question might be open to doubt, but that to-day the Orleanists were resolved to reappear on the stage with lustre, and it was absurd to pretend that they would exercise no influence on public opinion, and that, in any event, it would be a quite unexpected piece of good fortune for them to receive, by reason of our own abdication, all the honours of the religious question, and the benefits of independent opposition, when both these merits so fairly belonged to us.

"Finding that I produced no impression, I limited myself, after a very long interview, to pointing out that there was ample time for the examination of such matters, that it was very

natural that the impression of a few of us should not carry the day, and that M. Berryer was confined to the house by illness for a week or so; and that I begged that this interval might be employed in an inquiry the two clashing results of which might be talked over when M. Berryer was well again.

"M. Berryer came back to Paris, and, after having received a short morning call from M. de Lévis, he asked for an interview with the Duc de Noailles in my presence. But before the appointed day, information we had not asked for came pouring in from all sides, demonstrating that orders had been given to ignore public opinion, and that no attempt whatever made to ascertain the important opinions which were so easily available. The evidence of the Lemercier Committee was represented in a sense diametrically counter to the facts, and a similar blunder was made about the opinions of M. Guizot and M. Duchatel.

"Hence it is not astonishing, Monseigneur, that the meeting at the Duc de Noailles' opened, not like a debate cordial on both sides, but like a frontal protest on our part against the doubtless unintentional surprise by which the difficulty was hoped to be overridden. The Duc de Lévis replied to the complaints of M. Berryer, the Duc de Noailles, and myself, that the Count de Chambord's course was irrevocably settled, and all he had to do was to put it into execution. We might write to Monseigneur if we liked, though it was but fair to warn us it would be to no purpose, and that he would himself be astonished if we, clinging so stoutly to our own opinion, contested Monseigneur's right to have one of his own.

"We answered that it was one thing for the Count de Chambord to have an opinion and to express it without imposing it, but that what was now being practised under our eyes was quite a different thing, subordinating as it would the majority to the minority, and eluding all means of coming to an agreement on the substance if not on the form. Entering thereupon into a practical discussion of the matter, and taking for example the Daru Réunion, which Monseigneur had recently approved, we said to M. de Lévis—

"How can we now present ourselves at this meeting, where have been seen for the first time in a complete group the most distinguished heads of all the Liberal-Conservative forces? What could our attitude be there? We only went there to stipulate on

behalf of that common agreement and cement different elements, the sole guarantee of a solid and durable future.

"What could we do there in future? Should we represent the action and interests of the Legitimate party at the next electoral contest? But we are no longer entitled to do so, since we are bound, disarmed and disavowed.

"Are we to concert upon some common idea for publication in the press? But the *Union* and the country journals which follow the same impulse would not only not accept from us our line of conduct, but would attack it if they thought fit to do so. They and their correspondents move in a narrow groove, but because they live by and act in the name of Monseigneur, they represent an argument much more powerful than their action. In reality, they have only a few followers, but they can compromise a great many since they drag the King's name into the arena of burning controversies.

"Can we treat for exchanges or compensation of votes in certain districts? But those to whom we might promise our support would soon receive word from the departments that the correspondents of the Count de Chambord were writing and acting in a diametrically opposite sense to ours.

"Honourable men cannot be asked to go to such a meeting with counterfeit money: I mean promises impossible of realisation and exchanges without reciprocity.

"Can we be asked to go into a meeting including chiefs free and independent of all shades of Liberal-Conservative opinion, to declare that we alone have neither the same worth nor the same latitude; that we represent a party in which all questions are decided without us and without our knowing of them, save by chance and after they have been put into execution?

"To hold this language, Monseigneur, would seem to us so manifest a peril that we leave to whomsoever may choose to incur it the responsibility of showing you in such a light, and our simple duty, as it seems to us, is to retire from all gatherings where the honour might be done us of taking us for what we no longer are—to wit, men enjoying some portion of the confidence of the Prince and his friends. We entreated the Duke de Lévis not to see in this an act of ill humour and personal susceptibility, but to indicate to us himself the means of escaping the lamentable logic of the situation he had prepared for us. We had to separate without his having indicated such means.

"The above, Monseigneur, is, in what concerns M. Berryer and myself, the most succinct account I can furnish of two painful interviews and of the situation resulting from them. Allow me now to exclude all that is personal to ourselves, and only to consider the interest of your cause in its entirety.

"To begin with, Monseigneur, let me remind you of the long interview which you did me the honour to grant me at Lucerne. I shall thus have more chance of convincing you that I have not come here animated by any passion or personal predilection in the electoral question.

"Monseigneur will remember what I said a year ago, when I could never have anticipated the issue of the November Decrees. I said that, in the absence of all political life and subjects for anxiety, the country was not the less on the look-out for any signs which would show what Monseigneur's views might be, and consequently what inductions might be drawn as to a future reign. Allow me, Monseigneur, to dwell upon this idea even more strongly than at Lucerne.

"In the subject which I have just traced out to you, Monseigneur, the question as to whether M. Berryer or such or such of his friends shall enter the House is but a secondary one. If M. Berryer solves it in his own name and on his own responsibility, some will praise and others will blame him; that is always the case, and it is of little consequence. But if M. Berryer and his friends are obliged to shift on to the Count de Chambord the responsibility of their resolutions, the whole situation is at once altered.

"It will be said—and I might, alas! Monseigneur, not put my fears in the future tense, for I have already heard many complaints to this effect for several weeks past—'You see what this Legitimist party is which pretended to be above all things devoted to the great interests of society! It is at once urged onwards and pulled back. It is not the peril of the Church which teaches it to fly to its succour, but a word of command from over the frontier which admits of no reply. We cannot study the earnest and sincere tendencies of this party in its public acts and manifestations; this is only outward appearance. The reality exists in a few secret conclaves which we know nothing of and which are not always known to him who obeys them.'

"Nothing in the world, Monseigneur, nothing I venture to assert, not from my own conjectures, but by virtue of proofs too

numerous and irrefutable, can be more fatal than that such language as this should become plausible. Monseigneur must many a time during the last twenty years have asked himself what are the roads and declivities which have brought the monarchical principle nearer to or have made it recede from our country, every fact examined must have yielded a reply in much the same sense. The more the King has seemed to be the head of a party, the more the country has dreaded royalty; but the less he has shown himself the head of a party, the more sympathy and confidence the country has betrayed for an institution which is the key of its history and, to a greater degree than it suspects itself, the loadstone of its heart and intelligence. More than once, I know, it has been repeated to Monseigneur that this course of abnegation has not yielded its promised fruit. I venture to deny this, and I appeal to all the events of which Monseigneur has been a witness.

"In 1830 the monarchical principle perished through deplorable misunderstandings. The first care of the men who devoted themselves to its recovery was to seek it out among the dead and the ruins where it lay, and cleanse it of all that in reality disfigured and befouled it, and, in short, to restore its grand, noble and patriotic aspect. This was the work of the Duc de Fitz-James, the Duc de Noailles, the Marquis de Brizé, M. Berryer, and the men who marched beneath their banner so long as they remained faithful to it in the Parliament and press.

"In eighteen years this movement had so grown, had become so popularised and so personified in M. Berryer, that the Republic of February 24th offered him a place in the Provisional Government.

"M. Berryer refused such an alliance, but he remained more than ever the nucleus, or rather the head, of all the true feelings of the country. He exerted a great ascendency in the Constitutional Assembly, and in the Legislative Assembly he was the honoured regulator of the party called the "Majority of the Majority." There was but one opinion as to the talents, characters and devotions which had shown themselves in the Legitimist party, formed in the school of M. Berryer. Not one great question was treated without their being prominent in the tribune or the committee-room.

"The reconciliation of parties had gone so far that the reconciliation of the Royal Family was called for upon all sides,

and had that been secured France would have been saved in the true sense of the word.

"It is but bare justice, therefore, to state that the representative monarchical line kept all its promises. It re-made royalty in the public mind, and caused the great majority of the country to wish for it and be ready to accept it. It was Royalty itself, a branch of the Royal Family which, desirous of benefiting by the hereditary principle without acknowledging it, momentarily brought about the defeat of Royalty by the Empire. In the order of monarchical ideas M. Berryer succeeded in everything but what is impossible, viz. in changing the heart of princes.

"Ten years' silence succeeded this great labour; have they demolished or even diminished it? No; and the very question agitating us this day is a proof of this. As soon as the country is allowed to breathe a little freely and give some signs of life, it is once more a common understanding between all honest men which is invoked as a supreme condition of safety; and, as in 1850, nay, more so, all eyes are turned towards the Legitimist party. All the illusions which, under one form or another, were attached to a second Empire, now vanished, only appeal for your help in return for their avowal of error and impotence.

"Well, Monseigneur, you are asked now to crush and dash to the ground all this laborious effort of thirty years, this intellectual triumph which has been on the point of becoming a material one. Such a prospect ought to make you forgive the cry of distress which I presume to address to you at this juncture.

"Indeed, Monseigneur, it is sought to set you before France not as the chief of a party merely, but as that of the smallest fraction of your party!

"I venture again to remind you of Lucerne. In the calm of last July I said, 'Your followers, apart from a few everybody respects, are divided into two principal categories—those who borrow from you and those who lend. The former owe their importance or authority to the investiture of your kindness. Those who lend are such as apply to the benefit of your cause their influence, celebrity and following conquered by public and popular services.

"Those who borrow too much from Monseigneur will end by impoverishing you; the others can but augment what is styled in social slang your 'political capital.' On the present question these two bodies are more ostensibly severed than ever, and what

is wanted of you is to isolate you, and let you appear exclusively surrounded by one side and totally separated from the other.

"I do not conceal from myself, Monseigneur, any of the disadvantages of the duty I am now accomplishing. Deign to believe that I feel firstly and profoundly how painful it is to add, by what may seem an excess of obstinacy, to the afflictions of so cruel and undeserved an exile.

"I know also what a severe comparison one risks being made by setting up as a stubborn servant when others are so docile. I know what heroic self-control a king requires not to say, 'The friends who are quickest to follow me are the most devoted.' No, Monseigneur, they are not the most devoted but the most isolated, that is all. I willingly admit that those of our friends alluded to might have served the country like ourselves and made themselves known to it if they had chosen; but, as a matter of fact, they did not do so, and the country is either ignorant of their existence or sees it, and dreads them as symbols of a jealous and exclusive disturbing influence. This absence of any pledge to the country permits them to contract other engagements without limit with any one they please and on any terms they like.

Having no political antecedents, they can never meet self-contradiction, and they are never exposed to rupture with anybody, as they keep out of all alliances whatsoever. We have other advantages and other drawbacks, Monseigneur, and without defining either I assert that you will lose all our advantages and only preserve our drawbacks from the day when, by regicidal condescension, you compel us to revoke publicly our former language. Will not M. Berryer be tarnishing your glory as much as his own if he should declare that he cares nothing for the tribune and is incredulous about the action of his speeches upon French intelligence? And I, Monseigneur, in a much more humble sphere, after having endeavoured to serve the Church under one Republic, am I not to encourage the succeeding generation in the same struggle? Is it not the honour as well as the strength of the Legitimist party that it has been the indefatigable soldier for religious truths in France for eighty years? Let us cease therefore to measure devotion by obedience, and agree that all have the same devotion; let us only seek where it is most useful.

"I am here verging on very delicate ground for a man who may

be thought to be too deeply interested to be quite impartial. Let me, then, draw my arguments and examples further afield.

"Something analogous to what has been organised and is still going on in the Legitimist party for the last ten years is to be seen also at Rome in the manner of comprehending and defending religious interests. When absolute power gained its ephemeral triumph on the Second of December, the Sovereign Pontiff's mind was assailed by declamation of all sorts against liberty and Parliamentarism; then, fearing the work was not being done fast enough, the same party attacked the Pope's heart at probably its most sensitive point, asserting that whoever did not say yes or no, black or white, according to the pleasure of some prelates of the Roman Court, would not be really faithful to the Holy See and would be veiling—if, indeed, he did veil it at all—a Gallicanism akin to rebellion.

"These cabals prevailed for some years; the most eminent of the clergy in France, such as the present Archbishop of Tours,* Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, and the Bishop of Nantes,† were placed under the ban of suspicion and were in disgrace. We see now what came of all this, and, alas! we may mark by the long since irreparable ruin upon which side were foresight, good advice and devotedness. With very few exceptions, the energy of the defence only shone brightly in the ranks of those accused of Gallicanism, of those so-styled lukewarm servitors ever under suspicion; and the headstrong advocates of absolutism were scarcely able to say a word in their sees at Rheims, and Auch, or even at Rome! Let me add, Monseigneur, that this is explicable upon natural grounds, without impugning anybody's fairness and character.

"In difficult circumstances presence of mind is less allied than is generally believed to courage properly so called; it depends mainly on the more or less illusion on which it was nourished. Any man who is in the habit of believing that to deny a difficulty is to suppress it, and that to dandle a hope in solitude is to make it likely of realisation, will always be, with equal courage, more powerless and more easily disconcerted than one who, less richly gifted perhaps and less supple, but more foresighted, has seen the peril from afar and raised a cry of alarm.

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* Monseigneur Guibert. † Monseigneur Jacquemet.

"I will now make bold to look for a similar demonstration in a quite opposite order of things. The principal obstacle to the reunion of the House of Bourbon around its head was the Duchesse d'Orléans, and I am profoundly convinced that the success of the Second of December, so blindly facilitated by our divisions, will weigh upon her memory. To whom did the Duchess grant her confidence? Was it to men who, whether in the army or in the tribune, had rendered the most brilliant services to what she called her cause? Not at all! she always excluded from her councils Messrs. Molé and Guizot, and very often General Changarnier and M. Thiers as well.

"To gain her confidence it was necessary to show that you would be of her opinion, and M. Thiers, in a moment of petulance, once used these words to me: 'My dear colleague, you fancy that I am at the bottom of what irritates you in the Duchesse d'Orléans' conduct. You are quite wrong; the Duchess will not listen to anything but the echoes of her own thoughts. She is listening to-day to Montguion alone; but to-morrow, if Montguion goes against her, she will call in some one more insignificant.' What has been the result of all this? Why, that M. Molé, M. Guizot, and M. Thiers have more than once taken the course suggested to them as their duty, by their experience, their contact with the country, and their sincere and enlightened patriotism; and that they have professed and practised the reconciliation of parties despite the Duchesse of Orléans' views. Were they wrong in the eyes of France? Were they wrong in yours, Monseigneur, or will history blame them? I leave Monseigneur to decide.

I have one last excuse, Monseigneur, to present to you. I fear that I have spoken to you with unwonted temerity, even bearing your indulgence in mind. Permit me to invoke two main causes of justification. In the first place, there are men, perchance among your friends, certainly among your allies, who would not deplore your faults if you committed any; I shall never be of their number. In the second place, I am emboldened to speak thus from being wholly free from personal views—not that I attribute any superiority of mind to myself on that account, but simply because God and my health have long since warned me that my political career was at an end. I speak all the more freely of the political future because I can occupy no place in it, nor stand in any one's way. I should perhaps

have ambition if I possessed health and strength, but I must claim to be free of all suspicion, as I am of all temptation, on that score. I am no longer an actor, but a mere looker-on at events, and I take the privilege of speaking as they do in the dialogue of the dead.

"I make no reservations, Monseigneur, save of an attachment so intimately part of myself that it will only vanish with my last breath.

"Deign to accept the assurance of this, Monseigneur, and permit me to lay at your feet the respectful homage of the inviolable feelings,

"With which I am, Monseigneur,

"Your most humble and faithful servant,

"A DE FALLOUX."

To this communication I received the following reply:—

"Frohsdorf, June 17th, 1861.

"MY DEAR COUNT,

"I received your letter, and I have read it with all the attention which I accord to what comes from you. After the appearance of the decrees of November last I set myself to study closely the change which they might effect in the general situation. I have more especially been considering whether some modifications had not become necessary in the attitude of the Royalists and the line of conduct they have for many years been following.

"My first care was to consult M. Berryer, as it is my habit to do in all important circumstances. I informed him of my early impressions and asked for his opinion upon them. It was not until I had received several letters from him and the advice of a great number of my friends in the various provinces that I settled on the language to be used to those asking my counsel.

"I am, of course, far from believing myself infallible; but in my position I look upon it as a duty to form a clear and precise opinion on all questions presented in order to give a direction to those of my friends who ask it of me. I therefore profited by the Duc de Lévis's return to France to engage my friends not to depart, except under conditions to be specified by me, from the line of conduct, full of dignity, reserve and wisdom, which they have hitherto followed.

"The Duc de Lévis's report to me and what you yourself say prove that he has faithfully carried out the mission entrusted to him, and on all points conformed to the instructions I gave him.

"I am not unaware, and I regret it, that a number of my friends do not share my views. I have the firm confidence that many of them, as they have done before under other circumstances, regard the sacrifice of their personal opinion as a duty, in order to avoid fatal divisions and to further a united march towards one common goal.

"If some, whether from conscientious motives which I respect, though I do not comprehend them, or because they prefer their own opinion to any other, persist in entering upon a path which appears to me bad and dangerous, I shall leave them the entire responsibility of their conduct and take good care not to give them any advice, since they have decided beforehand not to follow it. I have felt it right to enter myself into these explanations and details with you, in order to make my mode of seeing things and my intentions well known to you.

"I renew to you the assurance of my most sincere and constant affection.

"HENRI."

Thereupon I addressed the ensuing note to M. Berryer, together with a copy of the above:—

"Royat, near Clermont (Puy de Dôme),
"June, 1861.

"MY GOOD FRIEND,

"Herein is enclosed what I have just received, and I transmit it to you at once. I do not hesitate to think that I ought to express my gratitude for the affectionate tone kept up and to protest against the erroneous information and the stubbornness of views.

"Kindly tell me what you advise me to say, and what you have received for yourself, and if you deem it proper to reply directly to the persevering assertion that 'your advice has been taken incessantly for ten years, when during that time there has not been a single question that has not been decided in opposition to your views or before they can have been ascertained.'

"I have safely arrived, and I am pleasantly lodged, but I have not yet tried the waters; I shall begin to-morrow.

"With all my heart, my very dear friend, yours,

"ALFRED."

M. Berryer answered me:—

"Augerville, July 1st, 1861.

"MY VERY KIND FRIEND,

"I thank you for the communication which you have taken the trouble to send me. Nothing of the kind has reached me, not a word has been transmitted. This letter of the 17th of June pains me very much, yet it encourages me to make fresh efforts and grasp every occasion for declaring the truth.

"In the present state of affairs what we have to do is not to condemn the course pursued up to date or to calculate the chances of success by taking another direction; still less to submit to a pretended desire of returning into a course full of difficulties, of mental fatigue, and of deceptions for the heart. Our urgent duty is not to misunderstand the changes which have occurred in the electoral conditions and in the field of deliberations which have become more public than ever.

"The immense interest of our cause is to give no one the right to say that its defenders are indifferent to the solution of the great questions on which serious discussion has been made possible. To say firmly that the ordinary correspondence gives a very imperfect idea of the true situation of men and of things; to repeat that if the previously prescribed line of conduct was both wise and worthy—worthy because there was no wish to act like the dupes of a parody of liberty, and wise because it was reserved in presence of political falsehood — another attitude taken under other circumstances and a new legislation could not be bad, and that it is not dangerous to acknowledge by an external act the existence of a *fact* which has been patent for nearly ten years. Lastly, to explain that motives of conscience ought not only to be respected but that it is necessary to understand their importance in the public eye, and that political reason does not allow them either to be disregarded, or the honour of obeying them left to others.

"This, my kind friend, is what, in my belief, it is our duty to do, and I shall not fail to speak in this sense whenever an

objection reaches me in the sense of the letter addressed to you. I believe it will be seemly for you to send a humble but persuasive reply to what was written to you. The occasion ought not to be lost, though there may be no such urgency as to the dissolution of Parliament for there to be any greater readiness to enter into this deliberation.

"I rejoice, my friend, in hearing of your safe arrival and comfortable lodgings at Royat. I hope the waters will be as beneficial to you as I desire. Do not miss giving me news of your valued health.

"The former colleague who took my letter on to Venice when he to whom it was addressed had, unfortunately, gone without our knowledge to Nervi, was M. Druet-Desvaux, an excellent friend, much liked by Corcelle and by you, no doubt.

"May we soon meet again, my very dear friend,

"With all my heart, yours,

"BERRYER."

After receiving the above I resolved to write once more to the Count de Chambord, and did so in these terms:—

"July, 1861.

"MONSEIGNEUR,

"It is impossible to receive the letter you did me the honour to write me, without expressing my warm gratitude for the affectionate expressions so kindly conveyed. You have been good enough to think that, in thus directly clashing with ideas to which, as I am well aware, you are so attached, I was only obeying a deep sense of duty, and you have had the goodness, too, not to leave me in doubt as to your indulgence in that respect.

"At the same time that I am anxious to express this gratitude, Monseigneur, I wish to make it agreeable to you, and a respectful silence is clearly indicated as the form best suited to this end.

"Nevertheless, the same devoted sentiment to which you have kindly done justice, Monseigneur, presses me to return to the subject—not of a discussion you have declared closed, but of

a misunderstanding which is clearly indicated by the whole tone of your letter o f th17th of June.

"Monseigneur, in fact, seems to think that the great difference of opinion manifested this spring is solely due to the electoral question and, in that question, to the presumptuous obstinacy of some among us. Unfortunately, the evil and the peril are not confined to such narrow limits, and the first proof I can offer Monseigneur of this is my reiterated persistency even now that the electoral question has for some weeks disappeared from the political horizon. If to enter Parliament had been the more or less open object of our ideas, now that the dissolution is indefinitely adjourned, what would remain for us to do save to efface the traces of a discussion painful to all who took part in it?

"Well, Monseigneur, whether the electoral question be far or near, not one of our wishes or apprehensions is modified. Why? because the situation which alarms us was revealed, not created, by the electoral question; and because the situation goes back several years and is of permanent peril for the future. This situation—as Monseigneur will allow me and forgive me if I repeat—separates him in a more and more marked degree from the new friends or allies who may best serve as connecting links between him and France.

"It is true that Monseigneur has deigned to tell me that he has consulted, among his friends in this grave conjuncture, as in others, the one man who assuredly best answers to the requisite of having a public programme before the eyes of the country—M. Berryer. What we should have to fear, therefore, would be that Monseigneur did not give the word 'consult' that meaning it commonly bears in political language, for, shortly after giving me the above assurances, Monseigneur would have received a letter from M. Berryer himself, in which he explained to the Duc de Lévis the resemblance which only too naturally suggested itself to his mind between the present situation and that of the last months of the Restoration.

"But without prolonging the contest on this point will Monseigneur have the extreme goodness not to stop me if I go to the root of the matter.

"For ten years, Monseigneur has never in any way varied in his personally affectionate sentiments towards M. Berryer, but he has not given him or any of his friends one single real pledge of poli-

tical confidence. There has not been one important question or organised action in the Legitimist party but has been solved without M. Berryer or counter to him. To demonstrate this I need only appeal to Monseigneur's recollection to go over the questions one by one, and to recall the unvarying language and incessant attacks of men who claim to be more particularly the interpreters of Monseigneur's views.

"This systematic separation from the old parliamentarians, which does not in any way exclude kindness to individuals, was understood by no one and defended more warmly by no one than it was by myself at the outset, as I can declare to Monseigneur, much as it may surprise him. I thought, and I have always said so to those who were tempted to complain more loudly than I did, that nothing was more royal, more French, more worthy of Monseigneur's mission, than the bitter disappointment which filled his soul when, by the provisional expedient which triumphed in 1852, Monseigneur saw himself frustrated of the opportunity so ardently yearned for, of throwing himself into the thick of our perils, risking his person, and causing his rights to be acknowledged through the lustre and brilliancy of his services.

"The more noble the heart the more bitter must have been the disappointment, and had this disappointment been tinged with a little injustice, or a little forgetfulness at first, those who suffered from it would have found it an easy duty to respect and applaud it.

"Moreover, it must be added that the tendencies arising from the most varied motives have corroborated Monseigneur's first impressions. The illustrious generals of Belgium were rather inclined to blame us than themselves for the fatal sequel of our efforts which had not always been unanimous. The eminent heads of the Orleanist party, moreover, had some of their number among the leaders of the army and in the highest regions of the new Empire. They felt a sincere desire to see the opposition to the new Government become as pronounced as the opposition shown to them. In short, for all alike, whether Orleanists or Legitimists, the most plausible motives existed for abstention at a juncture when the main currents of public opinion settled down into a deceptive security.

"For my part, the reserve which I ventured to make then did not blind me to any of these motives, and they depended upon other considerations which I rated as superior; but nobody, in

any situation or any party, announced his resolution to remain motionless whatever might happen in the recently adopted attitude, and in due course each one of us, some sooner, others later, did modify his course.

"To-day, except for the friends whom Monseigneur has consulted, and of whom I cannot speak, as Monseigneur has not let us know who they are, unanimity has been restored in a diametrically opposite direction. M. de Saint-Priest is in perfect agreement with Generals La Moricière and Changarnier; M. Thiers with M. Berryer; the Duc deNoailles with MM. Guizot and Duchâtel; MM. Dufaure and Barrot with M. de Montalembert; all reserving, of course, their judgment as to the candidature question, so far as it individually concerns them. Thus the work of ideas and events has produced a result in a certain number of years to which Monseigneur will perhaps attach its adequate importance, and which, in short, leaves him totally isolated on the ground where he could previously reckon upon adhesion and help, and consequently upon strength and support.

"It is this alarming isolation, Monseigneur, which involuntarily and invincibly carries our alarmed thoughts back to the days of 1830.

"For the Restoration had begun with everybody on its side; with MM. Molé, Guizot, de Barante, and Villemain, as with MM. de Richelieu, de Chateaubriand, de La Ferronnays, de Serre, and Lainé. All these went away or were sent away. M. de Villèle was no longer compatible with MM. de Chateaubriand and Hyde de Neuville, and when the day for M. de Polignac came, M. de Villèle was in his turn considered too much of a parliamentarian.

"Assuredly when the Prince de Polignac's name is now mentioned, no one means to assert that the *Ordonnances* are to be revived and signed anew, but we feel concern at seeing that the general experience of that time has not been projected farther into practical politics; at some of his spirit having survived; at this fatal zeal in purification and elimination which reappears almost identically after thirty years in the same terms and with the same proceedings; at the King's name being made such free and reckless use of that it is dragged into every wrangle and into every personal difference, and—if Monseigneur will allow me to use the only fit word—compromised with the same ostentation; in fine, at the phrase of immutable will being again uttered with

such astounding oblivion of the date when it rang out in France, alas! for the first and the last time.

"I know, Monseigneur, that you repel, as does the Duc de Lévis in your name, any assimilation between the direction of a party, properly so called, and the normal government of a great nation. But it is impossible not to point out a dangerous illusion in this respect. The country incessantly infers this assimilation, and nothing in the world can prevent it doing so. It is a prejudice more or less founded, but it is a fact fully visible and one of those which it is of the utmost imprudence not to take into calculation.

"Is not the analogy, Monseigneur, quite legitimate, if the whole truth is to be told?

"What mind can safely say it will suddenly shed old and endeared habits of thought? Who can make sure of effacing at a given hour all trace of the information, exclusive and impassioned, consequently erroneous in a measure, which has served as a basis during many years? No, Monseigneur, let the sorrow of faithful and devoted servants be the guarantee that not only must France's rapidity and susceptibility of impression be taken account of, but yourself, Monseigneur, you cannot guard yourself too carefully from the snare out of which the great King did not duly protect himself. I have been over bold, Monseigneur, particularly for one whose advice has not been asked for, but I am convinced that this boldness will find its sole excuse by being carried to the end.

"Allow me to give you one final example of the peril I am here pointing out. We have become gradually accustomed for the last ten years to hear it said before you that the military strength of the party would make up for the weakness and blunders of the parliamentary branch, and the erroneous conclusion has been arrived at that physical force and moral force are two powers which are separable, and which can the one supplant the other. The prevailing plans have manifestly this starting point, and under this inspiration documents are signed and sealed in advance, like sealed orders for naval captains.

"If the Emperor's disappearance to-morrow were to let loose the anarchy for which he has paved the way from one end of the world to the other, would not the course followed by you bear an imprint of this direction of the party which you will not allow to

be confounded with the durable and carefully thought-out views of your reign?

"Deign to remark, Monseigneur, that I do not attempt to dispute with the military party the possession of what it claims, although we know only too well on what illusions it battens. I need only allude to the very antagonism which was sought for, and which has perhaps been created between two forces which can rarely be called with success into play the one without the other.

"No doubt the kings your ancestors were great warriors, but they were also great originators and great guides in the sphere of ideas. This double halo shines throughout all the life of Henri IV., and the intelligent attention which Louis XIV. always applied to the divers movements of the spirit of the age covered more than one fault of his reign.

"The attempts at restoration or at government, accompanied by too much indifference to opinion, have more than once been made in our day. What was the result? The check to Don Carlos at the very gates of Madrid and the hopeless risings of his sons the two Infantes!

"What paralysed the heroic Francis II. at Naples? What reduced him, the master of a faithful army, to seeing his kingdom shredded away scrap by scrap, whilst he stood uncertain and motionless till the day when the blood of his race overpowered all weakness of education or politics, and he planted on the ramparts of Gaëta the double standard of military honour and of sincere harmony—but too late, alas!—with public opinion?

"And the powerful young Emperor of Austria, valiant, popular on accession—where is he after a few years of excessive centralisation which disdained the very moral forces to which he is now appealing to save his empire?

"Monseigneur, at the close of his letter, was good enough to tell me that he threw all the responsibility on those who resist him. By the nature of our convictions and the frankness of our language Monseigneur should be able to see whether it is we who would seek to decline public responsibility for our counsel and conduct. This responsibility does not weigh on us, Monseigneur, and we should be the first to accept it heartily if we were more jealous about our fame than the sacred interests of our cause. On the contrary, we shall apply ourselves to con-

ciliating, as far as Monseigneur makes it possible, what we know of the requirements of the land we live in, and what we do not know of Monseigneur's state of mind.

"Neither voluntarily nor lightly shall we fail in this conciliation; but believe me, Monseigneur, that on the day when other wills than ours—unmindful of prudence as they have been more than once—may think to ingratiate themselves by denouncing our views, there will not be one of those views which in our conscience or heart we would disavow before king or country!

"Deign, Monseigneur, to receive with the same indulgence my most sincere excuses and the inviolable and profound homage of the sentiments, with which I am, Monseigneur,

"Your most humble and faithful servant.

A. DE FALLOUX."

My stay at Royat was very sadly marked by the death of my faithful Marquet, who had been brought up in my father's household, and had given me so many proofs of the most devoted attachment. He was seized with fever and carried off in three days, without his wife or any other member of his family having the time to come and help nurse him with me. I resolved that at least his remains should rest near his kinsfolk and the place reserved for myself. The curate of Royat accompanied the humble funeral train to Bourg d'Iré, and brought me back testimony of the unanimous sympathy of the population, who went in a body to the religious ceremony and the burial-ground.

Thus I learnt once more that true and simple virtue is better understood and more honoured than the pessimists would have us believe. On the eve of leaving Auvergne I wrote again to M. Berryer:—

"Royat, August 8th, 1861.

"My very dear Friend,

"I am really infinitely better, notwithstanding the various trials which have befallen me here, and which, at least, as regards the water cure, have served to demonstrate its efficacy. I expect to be at Bourg d'Iré at the end of August. Is there a chance of seeing you there in the course of the autumn? Have you not an annual debt to pay to Madame de Grandville? In that case, my dear friend, kindly bear in mind that of all the tokens of kindness which may be shown me, none are so appreciated by me as when accorded me at Bourg d'Iré.

"I have not received any acknowledgment, direct or indirect, of the letter you were kind enough to advise me about. To tell the truth, I did not expect any. The course of keeping free from contradictions as much as possible seems finally decided upon. Hence it seems clear to me that the only way to meet this is by an equally steadfast resolution in multiplying entreaty and remonstrance in the name of truth so strangely misread. I hear from several quarters that the Information Bureau is unanimous in representing you and me as widely separated. I have also heard, and very recently, through correspondents of the Bureau, that active steps are being taken to substitute, in the hereditary monarchical line, Prince Robert for the Orleans Princes. In sound logic, it is what they were bound to attempt in the course adopted and the isolation they revel in. I venture to believe, my very dear friend, and humbly confess to you that there will be great peril in allowing the Count de Chambord's mind to be fed by, or at least to taste, such chimeras, without offering a stubborn resistance.

"His mind, the habits of his mind, the views he is accustomed to regard as fair or practicable, the depth or shallowness they usurp in his thoughts—these, I take it, must form the target for our last desperate efforts. If this rule of mind definitely takes root in him, it is all over with him and with the French Monarchy, and, at the same time, with all European monarchies.

"I should therefore entreat you, were I with you, to put an end yourself to the silence kept, and which is maintained, and which will be maintained peacefully and indefinitely, under pretext of there being no question afloat. I should entreat you to take as your starting point the patent facts of the last months, to reduce to nothing the systematic and perfidious misunder-

standings, and lastly, as regards the present and the future, to let that noble and mighty voice be heard in its clear ringing tone, which you cannot be unaware has no peer among its contemporaries, and which the Prince himself has told you that he will never hear separated from his own.

"Think of it, think of it, for time presses! Circumstances crowd on; the least accident may throw us all unprovided into the midst of the most decisive events.

"Forgive me my importunity, and let me, despite of it, embrace you with all my might.

"ALFRED."

CHAPTER XI.

THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY—A PARTISAN OF THE EMPIRE—THE 1863 AND THE 1869 ELECTIONS.

1860—1870.

THE more firmly the Emperor Napoleon believed himself settled on the throne, the less ceremony he displayed towards religious ideas and their representatives. He liked the pomp and hierarchy of catholicism, but not its independence. Bent on keeping to the end his engagements about Italian unity, which necessarily implied the destruction of the Pope's temporal power, he foresaw the ardent opposition of Catholics and resolved to subdue it.

The journals of authoritative democracy which had rallied to the Empire, having as a type and head the *Siècle*, edited by M. Havin, once a deputy of the Left, set to denouncing the lectures of St. Vincent de Paul. True liberty was threatened in one of its noblest and holiest forms—that of charity. Before closing their eyes, the founders of this work saw it spread over almost the whole of Christendom. Its General Council sat at Paris. Augustin Cochin be-

longed to it.* He was forewarned, and came to tell me of the imminent peril. The work had gone on during preceding reigns without exciting umbrage and without seeking their favour. But that was not enough under the Empire. Whoever did not seek to please was soon treated as an enemy. The lectures were steadily denounced as active instruments of an aggressive policy. M. de Persigny was then Minister of the Interior, a favourable circumstance which I was entreated not to let escape. I was quite willing to comply. I had several reasons for this which I could not reveal then, but it is pleasant for me to set them down here among my recollections.

In the long interval which occurred between his two tenures of office, M. de Persigny had resumed the religious studies commenced in Doullens Prison, and he came one day to confess to me that he wished to enter on a complete course of Christian training. When ambassador to Berlin, one of the secretaries of the Embassy, M. Edgar de Ségur, had spoken to him of his brother Monseigneur de Ségur, and had inspired him with the longing to make the acquaintance of all his family. The calm courage of the prelate, attacked with loss of sight, touched him.

"As I wish to make confession," he told me, "I should like to find a counterpart of the Abbé de Ségur, now absent from Paris; I mean a priest who, personally or through his family, has had experience of

* See *Vie d'Augustin Cochin*, p. 140 and following. Perrin, Paris.

society and is not too exclusively a theologian. Point me out such a one," he laughingly said to me, "as you know all the priests; for the gulf is rather hard to cross, and I should like to insure having a hand held out to help me at the start."

I named Abbé Le Rebours, a very distinguished young priest of an old parliamentary family, and of excellent education. Before making any positive engagement, M. de Persigny wished for an interview at a neutral house. This was easily managed. Madame Thayer, a parishioner of St. Thomas d'Aquin, having been associated with Abbé Le Rebours in charitable works, it was agreed that she should ask him, M. de Persigny, and myself to dinner.

The future penitent was delighted with the future keeper of his conscience. He took him apart for an instant and asked him, without concealing the motive for his question, at what hour he was usually at home. He went there next day at the time appointed. Abbé Le Rebours had been called away to a sick member of his flock, whose case admitted of no delay. M. de Persigny returned a few days after, but the same ill-fortune awaited him, and so again on a third call.

My stay in Paris being never very long, I had started for Bourg d'Iré the day after the dinner at Madame Thayer's, and I never imagined that the matter was one calling for any correspondence. But when I saw M. de Persigny five or six months after, I said to him at once, "Well, is Abbé Le Rebours satisfied with you?"

"I have not seen him since," he answered me in a sad tone, and he related what I have just mentioned. His readiness had therefore no immediate result; but the good intentions remained in him, and earned him the consolation of a Christian death a few years later. Feeling his end near he called the Church to his bedside, and the hands of a Jesuit father closed his eyes.

In more than one circumstance M. de Persigny proved to me how natural religious feeling was to him. One morning early he took me by surprise by coming to ask me to be his son's godfather.

"You do not think of what you are saying!" I exclaimed. "What would the Emperor, your friends, the grand dignitaries of the Empire, say?"

"Let the Emperor say what he likes," responded Persigny, "I shall tell him that it is no concern of his. As for the dignitaries of the Empire, they are in no way my friends. It is precisely because I do not wish my son to follow their lessons or examples, that I do not wish to give them any authority over him."

After the fall of the Empire I should have accepted this amiable offer with real gratitude. In the fulness of imperial prosperity I could not bring myself to do so. Yet I did not like to appear ungrateful. I therefore explained to M. de Persigny that I was always averse lightly to contract the obligations of a godfather without being sure that I should be able properly to fulfill them, and I mentioned recent refusals made to old friends in Paris or Anjou.

When he saw that my resolution was invincible he said—

"What I principally sought in you was a Christian guide for my son; as you have recently refused other friends, I must submit. But this does not change my views, and I shall go at once and ask the curé of my parish, the excellent Abbé de Borie, to be godfather."

He did so, and the curé of St. Philippe du Roule gladly agreed to his request.

Jean de Persigny was already nine or ten years old; he had been christened at birth; but family reasons, mingled with political affairs, had retarded up to this the supplementary ceremonies of baptism. I received a long letter from Madame de Persigny, expressing her personal regret that I was not to be her son's spiritual father, to use her own expression, and entreating me to recommend him warmly for his religious instruction to the catechisers of St. Philippe du Roule, who prepared children for confirmation.*

As soon as M. de Persigny saw how far Napoleon III.'s policy was going in regard to Italy, he opposed it with the ardour which he put into everything which concerned, in his view, the duration or grandeur of the Empire. He said so later on in the Senate; and he told me the same with a vehement style and passionate action denoting how profound were his

* This lad, who succeeded his father about fifteen years ago as second Duc de Persigny, died in 1884 unmarried, and the title is now extinct.—(Note by the Translator.)

convictions. I have before me as I write a note written to me by him during one of his visits to England, and it contains these words—

"What consoles me is the consciousness of having done my duty in telling the truth to the Emperor, and in not choosing to be an accomplice or conniver in any dirty actions."

His last political act in London was a vigorous effort in favour of the King of Naples and against Garibaldi.

I was therefore quite at my ease in broaching the subject of the St. Vincent de Paul lectures with him, and I found him, as usual, full of frankness. M. de Morny, who was more noted for cajolery than sincerity, was nicknamed the Comte de Ruolz (Electroplate). This could not be said of his rival, who began by reciting with some warmth all his grievances against the society and its ultra-Legitimist tendencies. I replied by giving the names of our friends, members of its grand council, among others, Anatole Lemercier of imperial origin, and Augustin Cochin, much more Liberal than Legitimist.

"That proves nothing, my dear friend," he replied. "In all great associations there are leaders who hold the secret of its true aim and the led members who never suspect it." At the same time, he took out of his bureau several reports upon two or three conferences in the South, and the letter of a bishop complaining that, in spite of himself, a bust and some portraits of the Count de Chambord had been put

into the lotteries in his town. In holding out this document to me, M. de Persigny's glance seemed to say, "You see how well armed I am for defence!" I would not leave him under his false impression. "Nothing, on the contrary, condemns you more than this letter," I answered him, "and nothing more clearly demonstrates the innocence of the St. Vincent de Paul Society than the production of facts both few in number and unimportant. The very eagerness of a bishop to point them out ought to complete your feeling of security. What can it matter to you when the lectures have such sure guardians?" M. de Persigny thereupon put the letter back into a drawer, and we continued the conversation on a broader ground.

"In an age when the religious attire inspires so much puerile uneasiness," I said to him, "ought you not to honour lay charity? Ought you not to respect these members of society, magistrates, soldiers, and functionaries of every degree and every opinion, who assemble once a week, without any other bond than a printed and published regulation, and any other aim than benevolence in face of misery ever multiplying and increasing? The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a work essentially appropriate to modern society. It is commiseration under a thoroughly novel form, purely arising out of the needs of the present time. To declare war on such an institution is to do so upon Christian charity itself."

M. de Persigny finally allowed himself to be

shaken. He expressed a desire to converse with M. de Melun, whom he had highly valued in the Legislative Assembly, and with M. Cochin, who was not known to him. A few days afterwards at Bourg d'Iré I received the following note from M. de Melun—

"I do not know whether Cochin has written to you about the interview with Persigny on the question of the society; it completely confirmed the good dispositions which you were the means of originating, but it proves how necessary your intervention was to destroy prejudices already deeply rooted, and the effects of which might have appeared one day in the shape of an imperial decree suppressing the society. It seems that your passage was the signal for a favourable change of wind in administrative regions."

Unfortunately the demagogical organs were not so easy to disarm. They ferociously pursued their campaign, which found more than one supporter in the higher spheres of power.

After a rather long resistance M. de Persigny gave way; but, at least, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was not sacrificed in its entirety, though the higher council was sacrificed. Deeply moved by this act M. Cochin exhaled his complaint in the *Correspondant* as follows:—

"Are we never to see a dozen persons in France allowed to unite in the name of God without its being supposed that they are conspiring? Are all the other religious associations to be threatened, and this by an administrative measure without previous inquiry, notice, debate, regular trial, or defence?"

While the Empire was thus advancing in the path

of hostilities the principal Catholic organ in the Press was not less blind or complacent. The *Univers* seemed to offer just enough opposition to dupe people. It is true that the Imperial policy in Italy was blamed, but the Emperor himself was never held responsible; on the contrary, the *Univers* appealed to and put its hopes in him personally. He was deceived first by Cavour, then by Cialdini, and afterwards represented by Garibaldi; but never as the originator and executioner of a merciless war against the Papacy.

At this juncture an attentive observer might have witnessed the strange spectacle of the *Univers* giving itself out to be the inflexible servant of principles, and treating with the utmost scorn all compromise with the contingent events of politics; at the same time feeding the faithful on theoretical and transcendental declamations, and lending itself to the most dangerous connivances. While on the other hand the *Correspondant*, that is to say Père Lacordaire, M. de Montalembert, M. de Broglie, and their friends, who were daily denounced to the Catholics as favouring capitulation and compromise, stood firmly in the breach, pointing out plainly to the evil threatened for the morrow, calling the enemy by his proper name, and making the vehemence of their language correspond to the indignation and disquietude of their conscience.

The Emperor and his political advisers were able to distinguish between these two courses of conduct. The sincere rigour and genuine wrath were for the *Correspondant*. The writers in the *Univers* were almost

favourites. Their criticisms were received as *L'Intimé* received cudgelling, with the knowledge that there was money to follow the beating. In fact the *Univers* accomplished two objects equally dear to the Empire. It artfully fawned upon the Emperor and incessantly denounced the sole adversaries feared by the Empire—those who, distinguishing liberty from demagogy, would naturally have gained by a regular opposition. When M. Veuillot travelled in the West he endeavoured to convert its clergy to the Empire, and drew up reports which he had transmitted to the Emperor by M. de la Tour. They were found in the Emperor's study when the Tuileries was sacked in 1870.

Here is one acknowledged to be genuine by M. Veuillot himself in the *Univers* of October the 20th, 1871—

Note by M. Louis Veuillot, addressed to the Emperor by M. de la Tour, deputy, who made the hereinafter-mentioned journey with M. Veuillot.

"In all our interviews with the ecclesiastics of the Côtes-du-Nord, we limited ourselves to repeating what we say daily in the *Univers*, viz. that Catholics owe the Emperor not merely support but gratitude. On all occasions he has shown himself liberal, enlightened, and benevolent. He has not done the harm he might have done, and he has done good which he was not called upon to have done. What we know of him demonstrates to us that this demeanour is not, as some ungrateful persons say, the result of a deceptive policy; but a natural consequence of his kindly spirit and lofty qualities.

". . . In the state into which so many revolutions had thrown France, she might have been given any master. It pleased heaven to give her a king, a chief in whom were united all the

characteristics of Legitimacy and with parts which justified the choice of Providence. What Louis Napoleon has done for religion, and, as a consequence, social order, no other man we know of would have been able or perhaps willing to do. The Church enjoys a freedom under his reign which she had not possessed for centuries.

"She was stronger in her political constitution under the ancient Monarchy, but less free.

"When the Church is free, all other lawful liberties are germinating or springing up under its shade.

"The instinct of tyranny never errs in this respect: it puts on the extinguisher where Napoleon lets the sun pour in.

"It is by this that I recognise in him a truly grand, liberal, and I may say royal spirit. He does not fear the freedom of the Church, which is the same as saying he does not fear good morals, justice, and the legitimate aspirations of true liberty.

"We added that the good deeds not directly done by him are those which he conscientiously believes he cannot do; but in that case he puts no fetters upon others, and he often seconds them.

"And we came invariably round to this conclusion, that we Catholics are bound sincerely to accept this Government as a boon of Providence, to support it, to pray that it may endure, and not to be downhearted even when we think that it is going wrong.

"I have not in any instance concealed the fact, when I had the happiness of kneeling at the Sovereign Pontiff's feet, I heard from him that the course of my journal was right in his opinion, though I had not sought to question him upon the subject. All these ideas have everywhere received unanimous approval. I have acquired the certainty that if any political opinions can be attributed to the clergy of the Côtes-du-Nord—I may say the same of that of Morbihan—they are Napoleonic. The clergy comes wholly from the people. In this way it naturally appertains to the new order of government, while the collapse of Gallican ideas left it quite free in another direction.

"With Rome, the clergy of these departments believe that God alone gives and takes away crowns, and that His designs are fulfilled when the hand possessing power protects the truth. I do not hesitate to assert that in the priesthood are to be found

the most sincere and disinterested friends of the Emperor; and the priest who likes him the least, if he is a good priest, sincerely wishes him to equal Charlemagne and St. Louis.

"Louis Veuillot.

"Paris, 29th September, 1854."

The suppression of the *Univers*, often vaunted by the paper as a piece of persecution which ought to raise it above any suspicion, was in reality an exceptional favour. When the Pope pronounced the anathema against the invader of his States in terms equally applicable to Victor Emmanuel and Napoleon III., the *Univers* could not avoid publishing the bull of excommunication, sent to it direct, without disgracing or unmasking itself. Hence it was inserted, and the paper was suppressed on the following day. It was a martyr but for eighteen days only. After that short expiation it reappeared under the title of *Monde*, in the same form, issued from the same press, with the same manager and staff except the brothers Louis and Eugène Veuillot, who remained honorary instead of working managers. The work was resumed without modification as without interruption, a favour which, under the Empire, had no precedent and no parallel.

Was M. Veuillot much pained by his signature being removed from a newspaper in which his spirit still prevailed? Subsequent events made this doubtful. If the unquestionable talent of the journalist only were concerned it might be thought that the momentary absence of the stir raised by each of his articles was painful to him; but if we look at the embarrass-

ment of his situation, and reflect that the Roman Bull drove him to the necessity of either deserting the defence of the Holy See or irrevocably breaking with Napoleon III., we can readily understand that he felt himself rather relieved from a difficulty than punished, and must have inwardly blessed a silence so opportunely imposed. Besides, if M. Veuillot had wished to continue the struggle, and avenge his own wrong, he had all the other forms of polemics at his disposal. He might have published pamphlets, or, as many of the Liberal party did, have issued an entirely free newspaper in Switzerland or Belgium. If he did not think of this himself it was thought of at Rome, and Pius IX., always putting his trust in him, was anxious to see him privately.

At this epoch M. Veuillot was on friendly relations with many financiers of the Empire, and more particularly with the Israelite Mirès. The Holy Father got him to give up this form of speculation, to retain him in the service of religious interests, and confidentially informed him of a plan for a vast and free organisation of the Catholic press out of France. After these audiences M. Veuillot returned to France in company with a young traveller, who saved him all the material worries of travelling, including custom dues, and even carried the key of his trunk so that he might verify the contents.* This trunk, pointed out immediately to

* See the article of M. Nettement upon this journey in the *Union* of January 9th, 1869, and a reply from M. Veuillot in the *Univers* of the 17th of that month entitled, "M. Alfred Nettement et une malle."

the police, was seized by them upon its owner's arrival in Paris. He did not show either surprise or irritation. He merely complained of it with a certain degree of humour in the Bonapartist organ *Le Pays*, and the *Monde* of the 15th April, 1860, reproduced the following letter:—

"M. le Redacteur du Pays,

"You have copied from the Belgian newspapers a statement that papers seized upon me, on my return from Rome, have been restored to me. The very day when the Belgian papers published this news *part* of my papers was indeed returned to me with the remark that the rest were retained to be used in evidence against me if a prosecution should be deemed proper. This was a week ago. I have employed the time in demanding as well as I could either my property or a prosecution. I have obtained nothing except the assurance that my demands would not lead to any result. This suspension in mid air, as it were, between the justice with which I was threatened and the pardon said to have been granted me, appears to me to savour neither of one nor of the other.

"The newspaper correspondents have circulated other incorrect statements about the contents of my papers. I confine myself to saying that no search has been made in my dwelling. My travelling portmanteau alone was seized. Besides some sealed packets addressed to His Excellency the Apostolic Nuncio, it confined family and business letters, notes made in view of a work I intend to publish, and some stationery. My children's letters, most of the others, and some of my notes have been returned to me. The rest have been detained, as well as the writing paper.

"I know your kindness, Monsieur, but as it might not suffice to induce you to insert this letter, you must forgive my invoking my right.

"I have the honour to be

"Your most humble servant,

"Louis Veuillot."

Other particulars, confirmed later in the *Univers*,

were circulated among those ordinarily well informed, about the meeting of M. Veuillot and his obliging travelling companion in the closet of the Prefect of Police.

The public thought all these tales very strange, but the *Univers* threw a little of its dazzling dust into the eyes of its subscribers, and the rumours about the incident died away as so many more have done.

I was among those who treated gravely such lightness in words and deeds, and I expressed my surprise to one of my friends, who was also M. Veuillot's friend. I did not keep back from him my impressions upon the subject.

"Here you are again, with your incurable cavilling!" he said. "Alas! the poor man is mortally grief-stricken. But he is sacrificing himself for the Pope again. In the trunk, and among the papers seized by the police, were all the personal conceptions of Pius IX. for the defence of the Holy See by the press, which Veuillot was charged to carry out abroad, and of which Pius IX. had made a payment on account in advance. The head of police did not miss so good a chance, but notified Veuillot that if projects devised at Rome were attempted to be put into execution all the Holy Father's confidences would be published, and that on his stubbornness would rest the responsibility of whatever happened."

I replied, but our conversation ended as always happens between men of totally different sentiments.

He remained faithful to his friendship, and I became more deeply rooted in my mistrust.

In the meanwhile his friends themselves became troublesome, by incessantly repeating to M. Veuillot, "But let us have at least a pamphlet!" He wrote one. The title foreshadowed that this time the blow would be aimed at those in high places. "Waterloo!" seemed to portend an expiation of the crimes of the First Napoleon against the Church; and an evocation of formidable warnings for the Third Napoleon.

Judge of the stupefaction of some, and the pitiless gibes of others, at finding this pamphlet, from one end to the other, merely a paradoxical apology of Napoleon I. Amongst other passages was this:—

"The terrible day of Waterloo has been considered from all political points of view, but never from that of religion. That is so petty a matter! Nevertheless, is it not true to say that in that battle the Protestant nations overcame and humiliated the Catholic ones? On one side stood France alone, the foremost and the oldest of Catholic nations; the religion of the army which perished at Waterloo was the Catholic religion; the commander, though excommunicated, was not an apostate; he called himself a member of the Holy Roman Catholic Apostolic Church; he had taken her forth from prison and exile and she had anointed him; he died in her bosom, enfolded in her mercy." *

Alluding to a strategetical error of the Emperor, M. Veuillot added, "By this error of our Catholic captain the Protestant nations gained the victory."

In the circumstances under which it was issued, this pamphlet was not only a brazen-faced abuse of

* *Waterloo*, by Louis Veuillot, p. 9. Gaume, 1861.

the simplicity of his readers, but at the same time an historical thesis of palpable absurdity.

The coalition, victorious at Waterloo, was implacable towards France, but it was far from showing hostility to Catholicism. Napoleon, "our Catholic captain," had destroyed all the powers in Italy united closely to the Holy See, had overturned the latter itself, had reduced Rome to the rank of a mere prefecture, had held the Pope, cardinals, and bishops in the most odious captivity, and had conducted France to the verge of schism.

The defeat of Napoleon at once restored the Pope to his States, the House of Bourbon and Catholicism to the thrones of France, Spain, and the two Sicilies, and that of Braganza to the throne of Portugal. The house of Austria resumed all its position and influence at Milan, Modena, and Florence. It was a very onerous alliance for the Papacy, and perhaps a fatal one; but it was a close alliance, and an ever-ready help to the Popes, who made use of it more than once after 1814.

The historical error which M. Veuillot allowed himself to make would have been a very strange aberration at any time in a man of intellect; but, under Napoleon III., on the point of recommencing his uncle's work in Italy, it was an audacious and unjustifiable piece of flattery. It was not only a gratuitous insult to history and common sense, but it flattered and egged on the fatal policy of national unities of which Bonapartism had need, and which it took care to revive. To characterise this pamphlet more completely, it must be added that,

at the hour of its issue, Russia, England, and Prussia were, in the same degree as Austria, adversaries of the Franco-Piedmontese alliance, and the allies of the Papacy as well as the Bourbon monarchies; Russia and Prussia through the ties of monarchy, England through a dread of the Napoleonic restoration in Italy, which had been dreamed of by Napoleon III., but which was stopped by the personal discredit in which Prince Napoleon was held. The Empire finally gave up the hope of this in order to gain an English alliance in Italy.

After the publication of *Waterloo*, it was quite clear that the Emperor had not as yet an impervious censor in M. Veuillot. It pains me to recall all these matters to contemporaries who have forgotten them and much besides; but I cannot suppress a last outcry of doleful humiliation, and a last prayer that the light shed upon evil may serve at least to enlighten those who come after us.

More than one reader will say, as I have said to myself, "Pius IX. many times congratulated the *Univers*." This is precisely the reason why it should be clearly shown what the *Univers* was in a moral as well as a political sense. If it had been the work of a man it would have died with him, and we should respect the peace of the grave; but as the Bishop of Arras said with pride one day, "the *Univers* had become a Catholic institution." The phrase is characteristic of the habitual exaggeration of that school, but it is not entirely devoid of foundation. The chiefs of

the school died, but not the school with them. This mixture of astuteness and violence, of insolence and baseness, is established for many years to come, and we shall long suffer its ravages. Assuredly posterity, which for Pius IX. has already begun, will not be slow to render him homage. It will never sufficiently celebrate the magnanimity, upon which so many people speculated, of the early years of his reign. It will never pay too much honour to his intrepid and touching majesty during a long period of misfortune, but will it not add that he was deceived on several political points and notably by two men, Cardinal Antonelli and Louis Veuillot: by the Cardinal, who left so large an inheritance and so mean a memory; by M. Veuillot, who, invested with a dictatorship of the Catholic press, constantly falsified the religious apologia and dishonoured it as far as lay in his power?

On many occasions the Legislative Body had shown signs of hesitation and repugnance for the policy to which it dared not refuse its votes, whilst it perceived the peril of the same. M. Thiers stood as a candidate for Paris in the 1863 elections. M. Berryer, whose scruples I have stated, would not separate his efforts from those of M. Thiers, and as soon as he had made up his mind on this point he lost no time in returning to parliamentary life. He wrote me from Nantes, where he went nearly every year to share in the mourning of Madame Grandville, asking me to meet him with General de la Moricière, either at the latter's resi-

dence or my own, in order that we might all three discuss in detail the woes of the Church and the perils of France. I preferred the meeting to be at the General's country seat, Chillon, being nearer than Bourg d'Iré to the Nantes railway.

We spent two days in long conversations which had not the piquant contrasts of the imaginary "Intrigue at Augerville" (M. Berryer's country seat), but were none the less inspired by the most sincere patriotism. General de la Moricière was also an admirable talker, less witty than M. Thiers, less perfectly aristocratic than Montalembert, less restrained than M. Berryer, but not the less incomparable when his warmth, his vehemence, his sudden and picturesque imagery gave colour and force to a just idea. He could not contain himself in speaking of the abuses of Roman administration, of which he had had a close view, and by which Thomas de Quatrebarbes had been similarly struck. "No good can ever be done in Rome," the General would ejaculate, "until four *Monsignori* are hanged at the four corners of the city!" But his ever thunderous voice changed tone when he spoke of the Church itself, the Vicar of Christ, the heart of Pius IX., and of the true fight which should take the place of vain wrangles, pitiless greed, and blind fanaticism.

On the electoral question we were agreed to encourage M. Berryer. We obtained a promise from him that he would stop on the way at Monseigneur Guibert's, then Archbishop of Tours, to induce him

to act upon the episcopate over which he exerted so great an influence. As for entering Parliament myself, I refused absolutely, giving my kind friends two reasons for doing so—a greater and a minor one. The first was the incurable state of my health and its radical incompatibility with public life; the other, the certainty of the success of M. de Chauvigné, the outgoing deputy for the Segré arrondissement, and the uncertainty of mine, as my candidature was certain to be more bitterly opposed by the Government. I could not deceive myself in this respect, as the Prefecture of Maine-et-Loire had taken measures in advance against any attempt I might make. M. de Chauvigné was elected without difficulty, and I did not anticipate my peaceful invalid life being broken in upon, when I was sadly grieved by the death of this dear friend, still in the prime of life. I was again pressed, as well from Paris as at home, to stand.

In contradiction to what ordinarily occurs, the strong probability of my failure determined me to do so. I could no longer offer as an objection the fear of keeping out such a Conservative as M. de Chauvigné without being certain of filling his place. My name so naturally connected the memories of 1849 with the new efforts attempted in defence of the Holy Chair that I could not refuse to join in this manifestation, which would have its significance, even if falling short of absolute success. As for the Government, in order to take us unprepared, it convoked the electors so rapidly that the strictly legal

interval was barely observed. On my part I wasted no time or strength in useless visits to Segré, where the majority was incontestably mine; but I went to Baugé where the opposition candidate and I were alike strangers.

This was M. Eugène Berger, a man of intellect, knowledge, and perfect fairness, and yet none the less the true type of the official candidate. He had passed all his political career in the Ministry of the Interior, and the Minister had sent him directly from the office to come back a deputy. He was a native of Anjou, and his father, for a long time the secretary-general of the Maine-et-Loire Prefecture, had for years been appointing or manipulating all the mayors in the district. We met at Baugé, where we exchanged our cards, and had not throughout the contest the least fault to find with each other. The Prefect was not so moderate, well knowing that success was the foremost title to ministerial favour, as it is in many other countries and at other times.

The polling was what might have been expected at that juncture. My rival had 11,000 votes and I had about 6,000. Under such pressure this polling did honour to the independence of Anjou, and I had more grounds to be proud than vexed. My wife had at least as much liking for retirement as myself, and we resumed our home life with the resolution not to let it be disturbed again. Nevertheless I had to meet a new temptation at the 1869 elections, and, after a stubborn resistance, I gave way anew to the argu-

ment, "Only give us your name as a protest, we ask nothing more."

This time the appeal came from La Vendée department, and the men most rightfully representing that noble land came to Bourg d'Iré, among them Count de Rorthays, then eighty years old, member of the General Council, where he sat for another ten years; his nephew, Emanuel, afterwards Prefect of the Morbihan; Count de Chabot; Baron de Landreau; M. Edouard de la Bassetière, ere long to be himself elected by La Vendée; and M. Lallié, a future representative of the Loire-Inférieure. As soon as my consent was wrested from me I contemplated with great pleasure a visit to the Sables-d'Olonne circumscription which was assigned me. During the whole trip I was overwhelmed with attentions which I cannot recall without amusement and gratitude. People moved from their houses to ensure me quiet rooms and peaceful nights. When, at an electoral dinner, everybody set to talking at once a kind friend would rise and call for silence, which would sometimes last five minutes. I was often obliged to keep my bed when a great number of neighbours and parish priests had assembled. I would painfully appear just for a minute, utter my thanks, propose a toast, and return to my couch, astonished more and more that my friends should wish to present to a population so rude in health a candidate who could not keep on his legs.

However, I gave myself up body and soul to my

patrons. I never asked of an evening whither they were going to take me on the morrow. Once in the carriage, I was instructed what to do and say. Two or three times in one day I would have to unfold my political theme, working in as best I might the local questions interesting to my audience. What an effort, not to rise but to fall! I call it falling, to descend to talk to men of their interests in order to bring them to a sense of their duties.

Montesquieu said of our ancient Parliaments: "In this tribunal voting went by the majority, but experience has taught that it would be better to go by the minority, which is natural enough, for there are very few men of true intelligence, and everybody admits there is an infinity of false ones." *

How much more true this is of universal suffrage when it is taken out of the parish sphere, in which it is sound in its judgments, and introduced into the political sphere, where it is incurably incompetent. The more I have seen of its workings the more I am convinced that neither Republic nor Monarchy can support such a rule long or with impunity.

My tour being completed I quitted my Vendean friends without awaiting the result of the count. News of my second failure reached me at Nantes; I had 6,000 votes as in Anjou. I was going to take the train for Angers when up ran into the station M. Emerand de la Rochette, shouting "Do not take a ticket!" He said that the official candidate had met with a

* *Lettres Persanes*, letter 86.

check in the Bourbon-Vendée district and that, as a second vote would be taken in a fortnight, they begged me to turn back. They worked out their calculations in such a way as to ensure a brilliant revenge for the Sables-d'Olonne failure. This promise of revenge was the very thing to make me go off at once. I thanked him sincerely, but nothing could prevent me getting into the carriage. Two hours afterwards, I was in Angers.

In the middle of a deep sleep, in my snug little house in the Impasse des Jacobins, I was startled by an extra loud peal at the bell. It was M. de Rorthays, who had followed me from Nantes. It was midnight; not the hour to claim a hearing, but yet not the hour to refuse it and leave a friend out in the street. So the door was opened, and M. de Rorthays came up to sit by my bedside, where he spent three hours. It is only justice to him to add that kindness, patriotism, and political spirit could not speak a more pressing language. I remained unconvinced. Still I felt that in presence of this courageous young man, with such sincere and optimistic devotion, personal objections were little to stand upon, and for that I must speak the language of my profound convictions.

"I am more touched than I can express," I said to him, "by your persistency, and I quite believe in the accuracy of your calculations, but pray let another profit by them. In any case, be sure that this Parliament will not last long, and will disappear in a dreadful tempest. Neither you nor I know at present what

will be its general composition; still two results are so likely that to me they seem certain. The majority will still be in favour of the Government, but the minority will grow in the House and have a *point d'appui* in the country upon other minorities everywhere resolute and considerable. Political force is still the Emperor's, but moral force is already against him. He is not the man to remain in that situation, and he will seek a prompt diversion at any cost. There is only one diversion, I mean war, and he will think of nothing else from to-morrow. He will pretend to introduce a more liberal rule, for he always begins by giving way. But his real thoughts will be elsewhere called upon to become openly liberal or to draw the sword; he will draw it. At the first cannon shot France will applaud, and we shall be enwrapped in a whirlwind which will carry us—whither God alone knows."

I grew very animated in holding this language to M. de Rorthays, for the presentiment of this war was deeply rooted in me, and at last very nearly converted, or at least shook his convictions. He quitted me, with a shake of the hand, to return to the station. We have often met since. I have just left him as I write these lines. He asked me if I still had the gift of prophecy. I answered that it was a rarer and more difficult gift to exercise under the Republic than the Empire. Despotism in France almost always plays the same game. Revolutionary passions are more fanciful, and are less easy to divine. They do not

know themselves very well, and panic plays a greater part in their work than calculation.

The Bourbon-Vendée election, in which I had refused to take part, ended in the success of the Marquis de Sainte-Hermine, the official candidate, who died a few weeks afterwards. This death exposed me to the same pitfall as that of M. de Chauvigné. The Vendeans had the extreme goodness to use this fatality as an argument, and they renewed their representations, dispensing even with my return among them. I would not have undertaken to canvass in any case, as the election was to take place in the heart of winter. I let them have my name, but remained at Bourg d'Iré. This time I had a narrow escape, as my friends, growing warm in the cause, only fell short of a majority by two or three hundred votes. Ardour and devotion could not be carried farther. It may be that some who voted for me have since congratulated themselves on not having had me as a representative, and I esteem them too much not to be astonished at their having so abruptly and completely passed from the opinions common to us under the Empire, to those of "the Light Horse" in the Versailles Assembly.

CHAPTER XII.

THE COUNCIL—DEATHS OF PÈRE LACORDAIRE, GENERAL DE LA MORICIÈRE, BERRYER, AND DE MONTALEMBERT.

1861—1870.

In the midst of the divisions sown among Catholics by burning controversies the prospect of a Council was hailed by everybody with the same approbation. The Bishop of Orleans was one of the first to solicit it. M. de Montalembert found in this suggestion one of his consolations on his bed of pain, and those among us who, in September, 1867, went to the Congress of Malines warmly applauded it. I myself got into the tribune at this Congress to offer homage to the Sovereign Pontiff's bold and touching idea in convoking this Council, which seemed to say: "Though many lips are sealed and many a voice stifled I shall open the mouth of the universal Church!" (Applause.) "Men's minds are distracted by doubt, hearts are ill at ease; but I, whom people call the enemy of discussion, open the freest and widest debate upon the primordial concerns of all mankind!"

And paying honour to this century for the invention

of railways I added: "Do you believe that this great idea of conciliation will not be marvellously facilitated by the rapidity of communications? All of you, my hearers, versed in the history of the Church know the slowness and difficulties of the Council of Trent, which lasted I dare not say how many years, and was postponed over and over again. Do you not think that the next Council will be more complete, numerous, and universal than previous ones?"

Unanimity in assent and concord did not suit those who, under pretence of zeal, had staked all their moral and material fortunes on the war declared by them upon common sense. They had recently made a campaign against the *Correspondant* and its principal writers about "the Inscription on the Rock in Brénil." The most thorough and well-authenticated denials had not pacified them, they wanted to make us out to be heretics.

Four Latin lines on a marble slab in M. de Montalembert's chapel, that touching memento of pious friendships, had been transformed into an impudent memorial of an anti-Roman conspiracy. They were going to pursue the same course against us, and give themselves up to the same freaks of the imagination about the Council. I, therefore, deem it necessary to note down a fact here which defies all contradiction—namely, that unanimity on open or dubious questions never existed in the *Correspondant*, and that docility on questions defined by the Church has been always without reserve."

Père Lacordaire and M. de Montalembert were the oldest Ultramontanes amongst us, as they were the most learned and resolute; but they were not merely Ultramontanes, being no less friends of political liberty, and it was their championing of liberty which in many minds neutralised their devotion to Ultramontanism.

I need not speak for Père Lacordaire. His whole life and work and the whole Order of St. Dominique speak for him. As for M. de Montalembert, as soon as the polemics arose about the Council, he remained true to himself and often said to some of his disciples—

"You are going wrong in dwelling too much on the infallibility of the Pope; it is not its right or its origin which can be disputed, but the abuses which it is sought to make of it; it is not the greater or less extent of the pontifical authority which is open to dispute, but the usurpation to be made of it by minds without standing or authority."

Many of his letters in this sense are still in existence. Next to him and beside him Prince Albert de Broglie was the most versed in religious studies and profound knowledge of the history of the Church. His high and conscientious intelligence took pleasure in this sphere, as in that of philosophy, which had been familiar to him from early youth. If one were asked to define his shade in one word, that of Gallican might answer, but to paint him faithfully he should be simply called a Catholic, for he did not go as far as Montalembert towards Roman traditions, while keeping quite clear of royal Gallicanism and parliamentary Jansenism.

Augustin Cochin swayed between Montalembert and de Broglie, with the spontaneity and the good faith he imported into all his acts. He studied America and pleaded for the *Abolition of Slavery*, whilst the *Monks of the West*, or the *Church and the Roman Empire in the Fourth Century*, were in the slips. He not only did not aim at theology, but he had not specially turned his attention to religious history. In heart and soul he was a Christian, and an ardent friend of mankind, deeply touched by the miseries of man, both mental and physical. What repelled him in the ancient régime was its insufficient solicitude for the masses; what would have drawn him towards Ultramontanism would have been for Pius IX. to persevere in his first course and not withdraw his affection for Père Lacordaire or M. de Montalembert. In the perturbation into which he was thrown by contradictions of which he was the compulsory and saddened witness, Augustin Cochin devoted himself with increasing ardour to prayer, fervent practice of well-doing and charity. His was the nature least made not only for heresy but even for controversy, and unless faith and honour were directly engaged in a struggle, he invariably longed for everybody to become reconciled and shake hands as soon and affectionately as possible. His was admirable candour in a marvellous mind.

As far as I can judge myself, I was the willing subject of the influence exercised by my illustrious friends, Père Lacordaire and M. de Montalembert,

who, combined with a little study of the French Revolution, had made me Ultramontane; I was kept on my guard against some exaggerations by Prince Albert de Broglie's high impartiality, and the ardent charity of Cochin taught me to regret that the French clergy does not more generally appreciate certain benefits in modern society which should not be misjudged or undervalued. Less declamation in religious style, more true compassion in the direction of souls, would have appeared to me a more effective means of installing Christianity into the soul. In our intimate exchanges of confidences Cochin and myself would often say with equally sincere emotion, "They busy themselves too much over scholastic disputes and not enough about the sufferings of doubt and misery."

With all this perhaps there might have been found in us some prejudices, shortcomings, and errors; but not a single settled and calculated thought of resistance or revolt.

At the first news of the convocation of the Council, the *Correspondant*, prompted by the Bishop of Orleans, showed itself full of joy and confidence. By way of toning down this early outburst some French newspapers and their echoes in Italy took upon themselves to anticipate the Council's opinions and to fashion and dictate day by day, with incomparable coolness, the future decrees. These passions of the coteries had exhibited neither reserve nor modesty in their insults or injunctions. The current idea was,

without the faintest dissimulation, to have infallibility promulgated by acclamation at the first sitting.

We began to be alarmed, and since newspapers took it upon them to assert that such was the unanimous wish of the Catholic party, we thought it best to meet such trenchant assertions with modest reservations. We knew the state of feeling in France and Europe as well as journalists whom we met in the streets of Rome or Paris; and, after a long silence, after patient and mature deliberation, the *Correspondant* determined to speak once and once only.

At this time M. de Montalembert was the prey of the most cruel sufferings. We therefore asked the Bishop of Orleans to receive us, and M. de Broglie, M. Cochin, Mr. Monsell, and myself repaired to his residence. By chance a Spanish prelate happened to arrive at the same time. He spoke our language too imperfectly to take part in our work, but he felt at least as much uneasiness for Spain as M. Dupanloup did for France. Mr. Monsell, now Lord Emly, as zealous as he was an erudite Catholic, had the same apprehensions for England. The Bishop of Orleans showed us some curious and instructive correspondence, which he had received from important members of the clergy or eminent laymen in the two worlds. It proved to demonstration that our point of view was neither rash nor solitary.

At the same time Pius IX. announced a grave innovation, that of not inviting the ambassadors of

the Catholic Powers to the Council. Civil and political society would not then have official representatives as in most conciliary assemblies. Still it was difficult to prevent this twofold interest and double society from having their witnesses in the nineteenth century. It was as such that the *Correspondant* claimed to be heard; it did not lay claim to any other right or any other part. It had no desire to go beyond this.

Each of its contributors who went to Orleans brought his quota to the whole body of the ideas intended to compose the article which was to define precisely our intentions.

Our contention, moreover, was not aggressive as regarded Ultramontanism in general, and the question of infallibility in particular. In all sincerity of heart we could only concern ourselves as to the opportuneness. We not only did not combat Ultramontanism but we expressly said—

"To-day everybody is Ultramontane," a starting-point which was one of our arguments. We added—

"Why trouble and compromise a movement from which no one now holds aloof? You will gratuitously arouse much mistrust, furnish many pretexts, and favour many hostilities outside of Catholicism, without gaining anything you have not possessed more than half a century."

Besides what would have been the field of dogmatic strife? The former Gallicanism appealed from the Pope to the Council. This time the Pope and

the Council faced one another, and were to speak in common. To whom could there be an appeal?

Hence, as soon as the Council had spoken, no one had anything farther to contest, and the founders of the *Correspondant*, as far as they were personally concerned, had not to accept defeat; they did not even dream for an instant of entrenching themselves behind the abrupt suspension of the Council, brought about by imperative events.

As soon as the Council had defined infallibility, the *Correspondant* hastened to publish this definition with an adhesion which could not make it the object of a doubt, and it never thought of making a merit of it any more than it expressed remorse for its one respectful article. As in the past it defended the religious cause without weakness or faint-heartedness, while bewailing in silence events which went to prove how much reason there was for its single cause of anxiety.

The infallibility was destined to be defined, inasmuch as it was so defined by the Pope and Council united, but it was perhaps less defined for immediate circumstances than for those of a more or less distant future known to God alone. In the great as well as the lesser European states, such as Switzerland and Belgium, as in France and Germany, the Catholics have not been more faithful than before, for that would be impossible; but the enemies of the Church have become more numerous and ardent. They have exacerbated public opinion into attempts at persecu-

tion, and their favourite weapon and their most perfidious plea has been the pretended slavery of the faithful and the pretended absolutism of the Papacy. This has not checked the divine inspiration; but human foresight could not reasonably neglect it, and none are bound to believe that those who have triumphed had, humanly speaking, purer motives and more upright intentions than the men who felt and showed the most anxiety. Thus Rome willed that all trace of contradiction should disappear after the suspension of the Council. She did not recognise, from one end of Catholicism to the other, any bishop of the majority or any bishop of the minority. She has only recognised and will only recognise a faithful and devoted episcopacy. Those who wished, and still wish, to perpetuate divisions were, with very few exceptions, laymen who would be nothing in the Catholic world if they ceased to be stirrers-up of rancour and discord.

As for the personal action at that period of the Bishop of Orleans, we wished it to be reserved for his colleagues alone, that is, for within the Council itself. It was also his resolve when we separated at Orleans. It was not, therefore, our humble advice, individual or collective, which induced him later to resort to publicity; it was the violence of the pretendedly Ultramontane polemic which suddenly inspired him with one of those heroic actions of self-devotion which lure great hearts. M. Dupanloup associated none of us with his action, which he fully understood and thoroughly measured. None better than he knew

what he braved and sacrificed, and that is precisely what completed the temptation of it for him. He did not send any of his extraconciliary pamphlets to the *Correspondant*, which did not reprint any of them, either in whole or in part.

Uneasiness about the Church was not our only trial at that melancholy epoch. Inconsolable private griefs were to be added, and I accord here in one pious remembrance four great losses which we sustained in the space of a very few years. Père Lacordaire, General de la Moricière, M. Berryer, and M. de Montalembert were taken away from before the great humiliations of their country. We mourned for them at the hour of their death; since then we have envied them.

I had been to Sorèze to receive from Père Lacordaire's hands the letters of Madame Swetchine, as I had received from her dying hands the letters of Lacordaire himself.

At Sorèze and in all the neighbouring country Père Lacordaire enjoyed the most unanimous and respectful popularity. In the vast frame of the celebrated college which he had raised from its ruins, he seemed to appear lighted by two new rays under the robe of Saint Dominique, the nobleman and the saint. One might have thought that the whole country belonged to him, so easily did he do the honours of it. He was greeted everywhere like a venerated and unchallenged suzerain. During my stay he gave his pupils a whole holiday and took us up into the mountains to breakfast, seven or eight miles from the col-

lege. Part of the excursion was made in vehicles which had been willingly lent him for the day. The rest was done on foot. The Père walked on ahead with a vigour which did not betoken so near a death. The breakfast, amid snow but under a lovely sky, a combination not rare in this southern land, was served with that cleanliness and care for the slightest detail so characteristic of him. The sites where we successively halted were chosen with the art of a consummate landscape painter. I renewed the visit made thirty years before to the Basins of Saint Ferréol and Lampy. Here it was that Vauban, struck by the success of a work which appeared impossible to him, said to Riquet, "One thing is missing here, Monsieur." "What is that, Monseigneur?" "Your statue!"

Père Lacordaire always took the chair at the literary meetings, and took an active part in them. Academic rewards were given by ballot, under the most strictly parliamentary form. Once a month the first of each class came to spend the evening with Père Lacordaire, when the conversation soared to the highest summits of history or philosophy. Music also had its place. As for sanctity, no one mentioned it, but it spoke for itself, as also did Père Lacordaire's assiduous attendance at the chapel, his frequent appearance in the pulpit, his eloquence, as fiery for his dear pupils as for his audience in Notre-Dame, and the constant visits of the clergy to him.

An old priest in the neighbourhood, among those who were always coming to him for light and encourage-

ment, said to me one day, "At Paris you admired the orator; here we have a better part, for we possess the perfect example of the rarest Christian virtues." Père Chocarne, tracing Père Lacordaire's life in its inmost details, has justified and vulgarised this veneration. Père Lacordaire's austerity abridged his life. When he came to Bourg d'Iré we remarked a swelling of the legs and begged him to take precautions. Other friends, doctors and priests, pressed him to do so as well, but he would not relax his fasts and mortifications of all sorts. Yet he was anxious to live, for his head and heart still overflowed with busy thoughts and zeal. But what he set above all was the will of God. As soon as he believed he could trace it in suffering, illness, and death he accepted it without a murmur; he walked up to it with a steady step.

As for General de la Moricière, nothing prepared us for so premature a loss. He preserved the fire and dash of his young days; he galloped over the hedges and ditches of Anjou as if he were still chasing Arabs. Except for some attacks of gout, neither long nor sharp, his health remained quite robust. He seemed destined for some brilliant feat on a battle-field. The sudden news of his death came on us like a thunderbolt; a La Moricière without life and motion had never entered our thoughts. I cherish unfading gratitude for one of the young officers of his staff, Joseph de la Perraudière, who, upon this dread news which he had read in all the newspapers, hastened to Bourg d'Iré, and, falling into my arms, did me the honour of

saying, "I come here because I am sure that my general will be mourned for as I mourn for him!"

M. Berryer was the only one of my dear and illustrious friends whose eyes God permitted me to close. I was in Madame de Castellane's house at Rochecotte when I received at the same time from MM. Cochin, Andral, and Lavedan three letters which pierced me with anguish. I instantly got into the train and took that well-known road to Augerville, alighting at the Curé's house and gasping out, "Is he still alive?" On receiving a relatively favourable reply, I silently proceeded to the château. I was affectionately received by M. Berryer's grandson and soon shown into the dying man's room. He held out his hand to me with emotion, and uttered in a distinct voice, which the Bishop of Orleans repeated in his funeral oration, "Père de Pontlevoy has opened the gates of heaven to me; now I can devote myself to my friends." As long as he preserved consciousness he remained smiling, patient, faithful to all his recollections, calling for and fondly gazing upon some of the portraits which always surrounded him. He spoke several times of the joy of seeing again his father and mother, beside whose burial-places he had long since prepared his own.

At Paris he had been thought so ill that the last sacraments were administered to him. A few minutes afterwards he determined to write with his own hand a final farewell to the Count de Chambord, and this note, bathed in his tears and written in a hand much

altered, caused M. de Montalembert to say, "It is one of the finest outbursts which ever issued from the human soul." It has been photographed, as well it should be, for it bears the visible imprint of all the emotions which dictated it. It is as follows:—

"O Monseigneur!

"O my King! I am told that I am at my last breath. I die with the sorrow of not having beheld the triumph of your hereditary rights, consecrating the development of the liberties of which France stands in need. I bear these aspirations to heaven for your Majesty, her Majesty the Queen, and our dear France.

"That they may be less unworthy of acceptance by God, I quit this life fortified with all the succour of our holy religion.

"Farewell, Sire! may God protect you and save France.

"Your faithful and devoted subject,

"Berryer.

"18th November."

By an incredible effort of will he would have them take him home to Augerville, accompanied by an admirable nurse, Sister Aglaé, a nun of the Bon-Secours at Troyes. He was taken out of the carriage in a swooning state; but, propped up between two persons, he crossed the ground-floor of his beautiful house and stopped before the portrait of his father, addressing the most tender words to it. He fainted at the foot of this picture, and was at once placed in an arm-chair and carried up to his bedroom on the floor above. When rest and attention had restored him to consciousness, he enjoyed for several days the sunshine to which he waved his hand as a sign of greeting. Twice he was placed before the open window to contemplate once more his beautiful trees. In

the plenitude of his consciousness, he could again receive the Père de Pontlevoy and the Bishop of Orleans, and I was a witness of the joy he manifested. Shortly after came a very painful access of delirium. No reminiscences of the Assembly came up during this, but those of the Bar were very frequent. None who heard them can ever forget the heartrending shrieks he uttered for several minutes without its being possible to calm them. "Hand me back my brief! hand me back my brief! You are going to disgrace that unfortunate family! you will disgrace it!" All the energy and pathos of his voice came up again in that heartrending lamentation, which seemed to reduce him to despair.

Resignation, dignity, and piety inspired and dominated his last lucid moments, and life flickered away gently and insensibly. His face had recovered the most serene expression, and never lost it.

His remains were made the object of the most affectionate respect upon the part of the whole population. To history belongs the description of his funeral. I need only bear witness to the sincerity of the public sorrow, which assumed a solemnity and an unanimity without precedent in our century.

I had not, as regards M. de Montalembert, the melancholy consolation granted me by God in the case of M. Berryer, that of being with him at the last. The illness which had tortured him during many years suddenly carried him off without any premonitory symptoms. M. de Rességuier so fully understood the

grief it would give me that he quitted Paris, in advance of letters and newspapers, in order to mitigate our mutual affliction at this irreparable loss. M. de Montalembert's gentleness, in sufferings unbounded and unceasing, was as unalterable as his fervent piety. Prayer, the thought of God and of death, and family affections were the main occupations of his old age. The last recollection I have of him is full of a charm which time cannot efface. He was on a reclining-chair in his library. Père Gratry was sitting by his side, and in the next room, the folding doors being both open, sat the sister of charity who had not left him for two years; while in the room beyond, its doors similarly open, the Princess Marceline Czartoryska, herself invisible, was playing on a piano Polish melodies and snatches of Mozart. The fervent historian of the Monks of the West and of pious legends thus appeared to me, watched over by a representative of the religious orders and by the sisters of St. Elizabeth and St. Cécile.

My poor bruised heart thought that it was proof against any fresh trial. I was soon sorely deceived. The war of 1870 broke out.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WAR—THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

1870—1871.

The war, though long foreseen and foretold, broke out suddenly at the last. Owing to the absence of foresight in our policy, we had not a single alliance; but more deplorable still was the lack of military foresight. Having no sort of knowledge as to what was taking place at the Ministry of War, I could not dream that our organisation was in such a deplorable condition as it afterwards proved to be; but I could not, like any one else who walked through Paris, fail to be struck by the indiscipline and slovenly conduct of our troopers, and from the very first I was haunted by the most sombre presentiment of what would be the end of it all. While accompanying a friend to the Angers station I met two regiments on their way from Nantes to the frontier. It is impossible to adequately describe their attitude, their jokes, and their so-called patriotic songs. A non-commissioned officer of cavalry, who had probably been brought up in a circus, was going through a grotesque sort of dance in the waiting-

room, after which he borrowed a hat and passed it round to make a collection for the purchase of some wine, which he assuredly did not want just then. His comrades were of much the same metal. I left the station horror-struck, and sitting down upon a bench in the yard, as I listened to the dying echoes of the songs which the men where howling as the train went off, noticed the scared look of the spectators of the scene and heard their puzzled remarks, I could not help sadly remarking to myself, "No, this is not the way by which a country is to be saved."

I am not able nor do I wish to say anything of the military events which I do not in the least understand. Alas! I can only depict here the sufferings of the men whom age kept at a distance. The disasters of France produced on me the same effect as any other cause of deep mental suffering would have done; neither reason, foresight, nor personal safety are the least help. As the tide of defeat rolled along the frontier, as Paris was surrounded by it, as it invaded France, all political causes disappeared and gave place to an indescribable despair. Of a night I never obtained a short and troubled sleep without having for a long time struggled to put aside the thought of our troops exposed to an unusually inclement winter, worn out by marches without result, ill shod, ill clad, strewing the battle-fields with their dead, and filling the ambulances, which were all too few and too far, with their wounded. Every morning on awaking it seemed to be a dream, and it was necessary to say to one's

self after a painful struggle, "It is not a nightmare; no, so much suffering, so many disasters, are real, alas!"

Certainly those who were condemned to inaction have no claim on the pity which is the just due of those who were able to evince their patriotism in every possible way. Still I must say that the lot of those who were useless was certainly to be pitied. Ignorance, doubt, conflicting news perpetually watched for, from which the watcher could not turn his thoughts, nor console himself with them, these were sufferings which, though they do not deserve to have their history related, nevertheless tortured many a heart. Even after so many years have elapsed I cannot recall without emotion the day on which we saw a balloon hung with flags floating on the horizon above Bourg d'Iré, then sailing towards us, and finally passing over us at a great height, right overhead. We ran together in a crowd, we shouted, we waved our handkerchiefs, we begged for a letter, a newspaper, any kind of bulletin to be thrown from the car. But in vain was our agitation! The balloon, taking no notice of us, went on its way, neither slackening speed nor descending, and in eight or ten minutes was lost to sight in the direction of Nantes. Then how many comments, and to what little purpose! Was it a messenger from Paris? Whither was it going? What did those flags which we had seen so distinctly signify? Did they announce a victory, or were they only streamers, signifying appeals for help and tender remembrance

from the Parisians? And slowly as the balloon vanished we fell back into our state of dull sadness, and began again to look forward to the morrow—and the morrow did not fulfil our hopes any more than the day before had done.

Of course our country was our first anxiety, but we also bore the burden of incessant anxiety with regard to the friends from whom the siege of Paris completely severed us. I had two dear friends there, M. de Rességuier and M. Cochin.

Augustin Benoist d'Azy had married the second daughter of M. de Rességuier. Though he was a distinguished naval officer he had given up his profession on his marriage, but as soon as war was declared he volunteered for active service, and joined the naval brigade under Admiral Pothuau outside the walls of Paris. He was at the Château d'Azy when he determined to start for Paris, but neither his aged father nor any other member of his family, not even his young wife, who was expecting her confinement, sought to oppose him. Indeed his brave Bertha bade him farewell with hardly a tear, for she had also made up her mind as to her duty silently and irrevocably. The day after her husband's departure she in her turn set out for Paris, to be besieged, after having said good-bye to her family. M. de Rességuier, who was then in the south of France on a visit to his eldest daughter, the Marquise de Pérignon, learning first the news of his son-in-law's devotedness, then that of his daughter, would not be behindhand. He

started to join them, and entered Paris just before the gates were shut, not to be opened again while the siege lasted.

M. and Madame Augustin Cochin were as brave, and had done as much. They loved Paris, and wished to cast in their lot with hers. Having sent their eldest son, who was only nineteen, to the front, they undertook, with their younger sons, Henri and Pierre, to face all the privations and perils of the siege. The Duc de Fitz-James had done the same thing; after enlisting his son as private in a hussar regiment he took his turn on the ramparts of Paris. M. de Rességuier and M. Cochin did not content themselves with their service as National Guards, both volunteered for ambulance duty, and at every sortie they went to the outposts in order to carry the wounded off the battle-field.

As soon as Paris was invested all communication was cut off. Sometimes, but very rarely, we obtained news by balloon, but we could get none into our dear besieged ones. This painful silence lasted for four months, and our imaginations had full play in fancying every disaster and facing every form of suffering for them without anything to soften or give the lie to our fears.

During this period of painful suspense my family and myself had only one comfort, at the time when the ambulances at Angers sent us six of their wounded. They arrived in an omnibus at about seven o'clock one bitterly cold evening. We had made everything as

comfortable as we could for them; and when we saw their joy as they scrutinised their comfortable quarters, drew near the fire, and discovered from our manner of receiving them that they would have every care, I felt—I only speak for myself—a certain easing of the strain on my heart. It is so good to feel that one is not entirely useless sometimes! Our six wounded men were badly hurt: one had had his arm amputated; a fragment of shell had carried away the calf of another; two others were wounded in the foot, and could not even walk with crutches; another had been shot through the body. The sixth, while firing in a field battery, had been hit in the thigh by a fragment of shell, and while he was turning to ask a comrade to take his place had been struck from behind by two balls. This he was careful to explain to us, saying more than once, "Pray do not think I was hit while turning my back to the enemy." They were all very good-natured, and we at once became great friends. They understood perfectly that the only way of showing their gratitude was by being more reasonable the nearer they approached to health. They gave not the slightest cause of complaint either in conduct or language; and when at last they left us it was with mutual regret. They corresponded with us for several years, one of them signing himself, with great simplicity, "Your wounded for life." One went back to the army, and died there. The one whom we called, by way of joke, M. Dumollet, is well married in Paris, and proprietor of a baker's shop. The man with one

arm has remained a member of our household ever since.

To the perils of war, terminated by the terrible cession of territory, succeeded the perils of peace, by which I mean all the uncertainty, all the passions and struggles of politics. The elections took place during the armistice, and were hurried forward by the irresistible desire of the country to conclude a prompt and clearly defined treaty which should replace the truce. On the contrary, the Left took as their watchword M. Gambetta's "War to the death!" This programme was imprudent, ill-advised, and in reality unpatriotic, and brought misfortune on the party. It was reduced to a minority, which would have been still weaker if the Conservatives themselves had not spontaneously given them a place on their electoral lists, but they had no means of agreeing previously to meeting. M. Gambetta and many of his friends profited by this arrangement, which was over generous, and did not at that time give an idea of the public indignation. The incoherent and detestable proceedings of the revolutionary dictatorship were judged at their true worth by the public instinct, much more so than later on by an Assembly unjustly called reactionary. Hence arose a certain confusion from the enforced absence of all preliminary agreement. A popularity nobly won during the war became naturally and justly a popularity with the electors. The result was an Assembly hastily put together, composed of men of noble ideas and widely differing opinions. This first misfortune was followed by another equally inevitable,

but still more mischievous: the ascendency, universally accepted, of the persevering opponent of the declaration of war and principal negotiator of peace.

On his returning from his journey through Europe, M. Thiers settled at Tours, in order to be near the Provisional Government. He held no particular office, but it is certain that nothing was decided without consulting him, not only by M. Glais-Bizoin and M. Crémieux, two dictators absolutely incompetent for the part they were called on to play, and by Admiral Fourichon, his personal friend, but also by M. Gambetta himself. The latter was the real leader. He said frankly, "Thiers does not like me, I upset and disarrange all his ideas, but we never quarrel. When I see him on the verge of being angry I bring him some maps, and consult him on some point of strategy, and then he is all right again."

As soon as I knew that M. Thiers was settled at Tours I set off to see him, full of the hope that he could give me some information or something to console me. I do not pretend to have foreseen at that time all that France was to suffer, but from the beginning of the war I was no less anxious as to the dangers from within than to those from without. The Empire had paid no more attention to the morals of France than to its defence. I spoke emphatically about it to M. Thiers, then I returned from Tours to Rochecotte, the residence of Madame de Castellane. On the morrow M. Thiers returned my visit, accompanied by the Duc Decazes. I was confined to bed by

one of those attacks of neuralgia which invariably followed any exciting conversation or departure from my usual habits, and this attack was all the worse as it was brought on by both combined. M. Thiers was so kind as to come up to my room and sit beside my bed. That showed that he was not displeased with my frankness; but on my side I was not equally pleased with his language. I was struck with two things: first, the care with which he avoided speaking of the serious future of our country; and secondly, the pains he took to flatter the vanity of individuals. I found these disheartening indications of his own state of mind.

To have arrived at the highest pitch of influence in France and Europe, without asking himself what was to be made of such great opportunities, without at least tracing it out in general outline, in order to fix the attention of some upon one great end in view, and to bring that of others to it, appeared to me a kind of levity, or a discretion wide of the mark. To be preoccupied with his own private feelings when that of patriotism should absorb all others, was, according to my mind, to show too little confidence in the French character, or to reveal too much weakness in himself, whether he knew it or no. At different times I asked him, "What shall you do with France when peace is signed?" and each time he replied, "I do not know what we shall do! I do not know what we shall do! But I am sure that with a Cabinet where I shall have my dear old friends Falloux and

Larcy at my right hand we shall overcome all difficulties." At last I retorted, with a good deal of impatience, "I have no longer the strength to be of real use to you; you know that very well; but you know also by experience that I should not accept a place in the Cabinet unconditionally, and this time my condition would be—the Monarchy."

"Of course," he replied, "we are quite agreed about that, but we must have time; more time, perhaps, than either you or I think of just now."

Then, at once, with his habitual flow of language and his customary brilliancy, he began on general topics, in which there was no room to contradict him before the materials of which the Assembly was to be composed were known, though we were certain that the Assembly, following on the disorders of all kinds which had marked the dictatorship of Gambetta, would infallibly be Conservative. It was noteworthy in his conversations that M. Thiers gave rise to inquietude at the same time that he dispelled it, but he did not dispel it completely; and, without indulging in diatribes which are perhaps unjust, and premature at all events, I was saddened to the very heart with what I caught a glimpse of in the depths of his.

The date of the elections, which were shortly to take place, was made public at the same time as the armistice, and the tendency of the elections was at once and uniformly in the same direction. The department of the Maine-et-Loire and that of the Ille-et-Vilaine, fixed on me at once as a candidate for the Assembly.

In those two departments an overwhelming majority was assured to the Conservatives. I had resisted often being a candidate towards the end of the Empire, but the extreme probability of failure had induced me to consent. But this time the situation was reversed, and it was the certainty of success which made me refuse.

At the time of the Empire my candidature was a simple protest. In 1871 it would have been to re-enter the political arena, and under what circumstances? Having passed through so much suffering, my health had become still worse, and it would have been necessary to leave at once for Bordeaux, and perhaps hurry from one town to another, meeting with God only knows what adventures! I did not doubt that the Monarchy would be the logical and necessary outcome of the disasters of the Empire and the wild acts of the Republic which was forced upon the people on the 4th of September, 1870. Eighteen years of disagreement on the question of abstaining from the elections had alienated me from the former kindness of the Count de Chambord. Providence appeared to have smoothed over our old difficulties, which had arisen from our old disagreements; but to return to power with our success and push myself forward with it was very repugnant to me. Finally, I should, if I refused to be a candidate for the Maine-et-Loire, open up to M. de Cumont a political career to which he was admirably suited. He had given proof of courage and talent, and it afforded me great pleasure to help in doing him justice. I sent

at the same time both to Angers and to Nantes messengers announcing my resignation of both candidatures. The Conservative list, both in the Maine-et-Loire and the Ille-et-Vilaine, won the day with a majority of fifty thousand votes. M. de Cumont, brave in mind and strong in body, set out for Bordeaux in my place, to my perfect satisfaction.

I might absolutely deny having at first taken any part in what concerned the Assembly at Bordeaux, but I should not be thoroughly sincere with regard to myself, nor thoroughly just towards some of my friends. Many wrote to me, many came to see me, and, though holding aloof, I took a certain share in the decision which was afterwards so much blamed. Was it wise to declare the Monarchy from the opening session of the Assembly, before the treaty of peace, before the arrangement of the different departments of the executive? No one thought so then, and I least of all. But I have not, like many others, changed my opinion since then. To have brought back the House of Bourbon when the enemy was still encamped on our territory, to have the dismemberment of France signed by the descendant of Louis XIV., and to give it a foreign army as escort for the third time, seemed to me the most unfortunate gift that could be made to the Monarchy. The Count de Chambord, moreover, was not in the least anxious to accept it, and I was of opinion that it should not be offered to him. The Republic had taken every sort of responsibility upon itself. It had endeavoured to substitute itself for

every other system, and to keep the whole conduct of affairs in its own hands, and without making it responsible for all our misfortunes, it may with truth be said that it had provoked and aggravated many of them by its presumptuous incapacity, by passion, by allowing party preoccupations to overrule patriotism, paralysing the commanders-in-chief, and discouraging the soldiers. It seemed therefore thoroughly just to me that the humiliation should fall on those who had so rashly called it down, and that the pain and the bitterness of the sacrifice should not be ascribed even in name to those who were innocent of the fault. With me this consideration came before all the others. Besides, the army no longer held together, and Paris was utterly lawless, inclining towards the Commune. The great cities and the other principal municipalities were in the hands of men who were either imbecile or perverse. Such being the state of the country, how was it possible to face civil war, to incur the odium of it, and blindly to incur such risks?

Such was the sentiment which the extreme Right applauded, and in which they all participated eagerly, without a single exception as far as I can remember. M. Thiers also extolled this same sentiment; but at that time who could blame him for it, who could rise up and say to him, "You think more of yourself than of your country!" M. de Rességuier, who came out of Paris as soon as its gates were opened by the armistice, learned at once that he had been chosen to represent them in the Assembly by his fellow-countrymen

in the department of Gers, not only without his having expressed any intention to stand for the department, but without his having been told of it. I at once wrote to tell him how pleased I was, and the following extracts from my letter, of which he has been so good as to send me a copy, relate to the situation of our country and the Assembly in general.

"Wednesday, February 15th, 1871.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"You will have no difficulty in believing that you are not only the chief but also the only source of the regret which I feel whenever I turn my eyes towards Bordeaux. So I shall not allude to what is so easy for you to guess at, and shall review that terrible past during which all our efforts to convey even a few words to you were unsuccessful.

"Here is a summary of what I ambitiously call my ideas, for want of a better word. You will very likely be told at Bordeaux that I was hostile to the convocation of an Assembly during the war. Let me explain to you how far it is true and at the same time false; nothing in the world would have caused me to write or speak a word against the elections; that would have been taking upon myself too great a responsibility and denying too fundamental a principle. But when the elections were twice adjourned without us and in spite of us, I said, 'I am glad of it.' I am convinced that, at that time, the elections would have been the signal for the greatest disorders, the wrong men would have been elected, and the country would not have been saved in a military point of view. I then said, 'We must above all fight the Prussians, and not throw ourselves into political factions and electoral struggles while under the enemy's fire. An Assembly is not suited to the rapidity and energy of the measures demanded by the peril in which Paris and indeed the whole of France now stand. Besides, the Republic and its men ought to take the responsibility of such measures, not our friends and ourselves who have done so much to avert this situation. When the crisis is over and the question of peace arises, France will judge men

and things with an insight which she cannot have during the war. And while the war lasts we shall have no liberty of deliberation, we shall only vote overwhelming accusations, without an atom of truth in them, at the risk of being accused of weakening the defence and favouring the enemy. When peace returns, we shall vote taxes, but we shall give back security to family life, and we shall be able to give stability to institutions. In a word, while the war lasts there can be neither liberty nor truth in the Assembly; when there is peace there will be liberty and even popularity in it.'

"If M. Lavedan has kept a letter written by me to him while at Tours, you will see in it these ideas set forth at greater length, and you will understand that I am not going over this ground again to no purpose, but in order to draw conclusions from it with regard to the present and the future. My conclusions are these.

"The Republic has just done us all the evil and the good inherent in her, she has completed the disorganisation of the country to the gain of the Prussians, she has hastened or aggravated our defeat in every way that she could, but she has enlightened the country as to her true nature and her true instruments.

"In 1848 there was a Republic which we may call 'doctrinaire' personified by Louis Blanc, Proudhon, Considérant, &c., and by forming different schools which contained fragments of truths useful to the masses. To-day, the Republic has shown itself in a low and brutal light. I do not think then that the country esteems it an experiment to be tried or prolonged. It only sees in it dangers of every kind to be averted the most promptly and surely possible. By that I do not mean that you ought to become hastily and violently reactionary. May God preserve you all from that! but still I do not believe that you ought to retrace step by step every stage of 1848. If you do so, I am convinced that France will be completely ruined by it.

"I beg of you to keep your eyes open to that pitfall. Before everything wind up our miserable situation with regard to Prussia, then with a firm and bold confidence in yourselves, wind up our internal affairs, that is to say, the successive balance sheets of our revolutions, selecting from each the element that caused it, and drawing up from the whole a true

national account. If you do only a quarter or a half of this immense work you will fling the country first into discouragement and then into anarchy. We shall return to every kind of discord and complete the ruin of the country. The question of peace or war has galvanised universal suffrage, and has just given us the 'Chambre introuvable.' If that Chamber fails to accomplish its work, universal suffrage, viciously organised as it is just now, will logically produce the most fatal consequences. The shores of the dead are not to be seen twice over, nor is the shore of safety after shipwreck to be seen a second time.

"I embrace you a thousand times,

"ALFRED."

When the Assembly determined to remove from Bordeaux to Versailles, I went to Rochecotte, where, being near Tours, I could see our representatives on their way. The Marquis de Castellane, who, though married, had volunteered, and taken an active part in the war, was returned to the Assembly for the department of the Cantal. Several of his colleagues and friends came to meet him at Rochecotte in order to go from thence to Paris, bringing us, with exact details, the confirmation of the symptoms which had so astonished and saddened me in M. Thiers. They had all remarked, what no one had foreseen, his incapacity for the task which had just been entrusted to him.

The first peculiarity to be noticed in a man whose patriotism was undoubted, was a singular levity in the discussion of the terms of peace. There was nothing in this to make a formal charge against him, but still it was perceptible enough to strike the most favourable

observers. M. Thiers vexed several members of the Commission by the childishness with which he interrupted and prolonged the most painful deliberations, in order to repeat the compliments which Prince Bismarck had paid him and which were so exaggerated as to appear ironical. M. Thiers seemed at the same time to be tending towards a singular point of view, he appeared to prefer cessions of territory to an indemnity in money. He repeated over and over, "Provinces can be recovered, but money cannot be got back!" Once he went so far as to say, "Do not let us exaggerate what is asked of France at this moment, it is only a small portion!" At these words a member of the Commission, one of the wittiest men in the Assembly, rose from his seat, and with a jocularity which often hides in him a deep and serious meaning, retorted, "There are cases where cutting away a small portion of a man leaves him no longer a man." M. Thiers was disconcerted for a moment, but he was never so for any length of time. In this case, he was soon at his ease again, by showing that he was right in some other instance.

Any one who believes that he could have obtained better terms than the treaty of 1871 in such desperate circumstances would be very severe and ungrateful. Therefore this is not a national reproach which I undertake to inflict on the memory of M. Thiers; it is the study of his character which I shall continue, for the weaknesses and faults of that character will be henceforth, to a serious degree, the weaknesses and

faults of French politics. In treating with Prussia there was on the side of our unfortunate country a fatal helplessness which the genius of the negotiator could hardly lighten. But in internal politics and in the guidance of the Assembly the responsibility weighed much more heavily, because there was much greater freedom of choice and far greater power. On emerging from such a storm, it was only just and politic not to enter into too minute inquiries or to indulge in passionate reprisals, but to shut one's eyes systematically to all prevarications, to encourage the boldness of crime by allowing it unlimited impunity, to place on the same level heroically accomplished duty and shameless charlatanism, was to indulge in another kind of excess as pernicious as it was immoral. M. Thiers fell completely into this excess, and impelled the Assembly to it.

M. Gambetta has passed sentence on himself by at once putting the frontier between the legal representatives of the country and himself, abandoning his satellites and his works in a stampede which ought to have prevented his return for a long time. M. Thiers with respect to this indulged in strange illusions. He would never admit that indifference towards acts or persons would have infallible consequences and tendencies, and that from his blindness or his complacency many deplorable acts of weakness would be committed. He believed, or pretended to believe, that in excusing everything because of past friendship he was acting delicately without doing harm to society in

general. The extreme parties perceived this very speedily and hastened to profit by this weakness.

This careless indifference was shown by M. Thiers on the discussion of the first question which engaged the attention of the Assembly at Bordeaux—the question of the place where it was to sit. That Paris was preparing for an insurrection was evident, and the greater number of the deputies wished to transfer the seat of the national representation to Orleans or Tours. M. Thiers insisted on preferring Paris. He pleaded its cause with the greatest energy. When he saw he could not carry it with a high hand, he proposed Fontainebleau, reckoning that the palpable objections to that proposal would cause it to be rejected, and bring those who disagreed over to his side. His reckoning proved wrong, and seeing that Orleans would be chosen he proposed Versailles, and it was agreed on. Events proved this choice to be wise, but M. Thiers, who only proposed it against his will in order to escape from it, put himself in the wrong in every way that he could.

He was not less obstinate and blind regarding the preparations for the Commune. It was announced, it was pointed out, it was seen approaching, and all that time he was living placid and smiling in the palace on the Quai d'Orsay. It happened to him then as on the 24th of February; he passed in a moment from overconfidence to panic, reached Versailles in great haste —it now appeared to him too near Paris—took no precautions, and left no orders behind him.

The Assembly has often been reproached for being too severe towards M. Thiers and too ready to take offence. I think that the contrary is much more true. Almost unanimously the deputies sought to avoid vexing or contradicting him, and when it was necessary to do the one or the other, it was done with very great delicacy and discretion. Mont Valérien, commanding both Paris and the road to Versailles, was of the greatest importance to the safety of the Assembly. M. Thiers had abandoned it, like all the rest, to the first comer. Messrs. Buffet, Daru, de Lasteyrie, General Ducrot, Admiral Janréguiberry, and other deputies went to him and gained his consent, not without difficulty, for the reoccupation of that fort which a few hours later saved Versailles and France.

A new siege of Paris had become necessary under the most painful and unheard-of circumstances. M. Thiers, wisely counselled by General Le Flô, reverted to his military tastes with more perspicacity and energy. He displayed as much talent as he did decision in the concentration of the troops which were still under arms and in the choice of their commander-in-chief, Marshal MacMahon; but this decision and wisdom were still wanting to him in the direction of the Assembly. He allowed the mob to enter it with the mayors of Paris in revolt; and without a firm reaction on the part of the deputies from the beginning of that abominable insurrection, Versailles would have been carried away by the revolutionary flood. It wanted

but little to change the social restoration which was in the instinct, the conscience, and the earnest desire of almost all, into a sort of vagueness, without purpose and without official title, and this through the incessant manœuvres of a Government in which still ruled, under the ægis of M. Thiers, the promoters of the 4th of September, that is to say of insurrection in the face of the enemy, namely, Messrs. Jules Favre and Ernest Picard. Thus the tide of popularity, changing visibly from day to day, ebbed from the Conservatives, who were thrown out of gear, and flowed towards the Radical party. The latter found it difficult at first to believe in their good fortune, but they soon became accustomed to it, and recalled M. Gambetta, exclaiming to him from afar, "There are no longer any Pyrenées!"

The sincere attachment I felt for M. Thiers forbade me to believe that he had entered knowingly on such a course. Thinking, besides, that my retirement and isolation would prevent his having any suspicion that I had a personal end to serve, and would render him more attentive to my patriotic anxieties, I resolved to express them to him, and, with a simplicity at which I am astonished now, though I am not ashamed of it, I wrote him the following letter:—

"Bourg d'Iré, May 22nd, 1871.

"Dear and Illustrious Friend,

"My silence, as you know, is not caused by indifference or separation, but, unfortunately, it is to me the penalty of retirement and illness. I have never been more united in heart with you, never more anxious to help you if I had only the strength, and to-day I cannot resist the temptation to congratulate and condole with you.

"Yes, you spoke nobly and truly to the Assembly when you asked its assent to the treaty of peace, saying that you had never accomplished a sadder or more patriotic task; yes, more than any one, you have helped to restore us our liberty of action for the future; but the freedom and greatness of that future depend also on our internal situation, and this is where you must now finish your work. Peace outside without pacification within would be the idlest, and very soon the most bitter, of deceptions. More than any one else you can avert, and consequently ought to avert, this terrible danger.

"You seemed to think that this great end would be attained if you reorganised the country without giving it a Constitution. I do not think that this thesis is the decided and complete expression of your idea; it is too materialistic to represent you entirely. The man who in 1850 gave to France liberty of instruction, and who from 1860 to 1870 covered the Catholics with his shield, is not the man to become the holder of a theory such as the so-called social regeneration, derived solely from administrative measures, and leaving on one side, or relegating to the shades of a possible future, any solution to be borrowed from the higher laws of political and social order. How can a country without a settled Constitution become a regularly organised country?

"You have employed this language in order to calm the impatience and blindness with which you have had to do. You wished to give 'our noble wounded one' time to staunch the blood which was gushing from her wounds, but you have never believed that this wounded one, once restored to health, would be able to remain healthy without convictions, without compass, Republican or Monarchist, Bonapartist or attached to the Bourbons, at the breath of chance or the will of the mob. In your great heart and mind you have not resolved to compel the abdication of statesmen when the highest deliberations are taking place, on their being set aside at the time when great national verdicts are being decided, and you cannot long remain entrenched behind the negation which has been your watchword ever since Bordeaux: 'I shall neither betray nor advise any one. My country will do what she likes. I will be her servant, but I will be neither her light nor her guide.'

"Oh! dear friend, do let me say to you, with all the feeling evoked by a deeply sincere and unalterably faithful friendship of twenty years, no that cannot possibly be your intention and the

part you have to play. You would do justice neither to France nor to yourself, and you would be, still more than your opponents, the enemy of your true glory. It is your true glory to have come forward when our great disasters were about to commence, in order to express aloud the alarm induced by your foresight, and to point out the danger and the way of being saved from it. Is it the moment to say that you are weary of this great mission and to sit down for a year or two in the unsteady presidential chair which is always being struggled for?

"Some of your friends say that you want to gain time, just in the interest of those ideas which are so dear to me—the monarchical ideas.

"I shall appear very daring to you in what I am going to say, and I beseech you to remember the respect and admiration for you which are habitual to me and which I cannot get rid of without being forced to it by my conscience.

"Even the hope of gaining time means that there is mingled with it the hope of immense profit; as to wait for the sake of waiting, putting off questions that have to be settled, and aggravating them by fear, and by the powerlessness to solve them, is not the way to gain strength but to lose it; it is not the way to gain time but to despise the precious hours which the Christian calls the gift of Providence, but which in ordinary language is called chance. You have already congratulated yourself on the so-called benefit of the prorogation in 1851. I took the liberty of opposing you on that point as I do on this. But at that time I understood you; 1851 was not distant from 1848. Then the Comte de Paris was a child, and either because you wished to wait till he was grown up and could lay a strong hand on the crown, or at least for him to be old enough and strong enough for his opinion to have weight in the councils of the Comte de Chambord, you took views which I might not be able to share, but of which I could not deny the importance. But we said, 'Take care! to leave power for a long time without exercise, and minds in a state of anarchy, is to play a very hazardous game, and to leave an open field to the Empire.' You know what happened. Now the Bonapartes are still to be reckoned with, and we have the Prussians, of whom we shall not be quit till the national unity is restored.

"I try to understand your purpose, but I do not perceive it.

"With regard to the Monarchy time can add neither ideas,

men, nor experience. What is not ripe to-day never will be. It is said, 'The cities are Republican, the country is Bonapartist, and the army wavers between the two. A good chance to bring in the Bourbons!' Let those who say that allow me to say to them, 'You enclose yourselves and us in a vicious circle.' Statesmen are waiting for a sign from the country, and the country is waiting for a sign from statesmen. And besides, the cities, Lyons included, are far from being unanimously Republican. They are disturbed and divided by watchwords and manœuvres which come to them from outside. The middle classes are conservative and liberal everywhere, the working classes belong to international societies from which they ought to be freed, and many workmen are longing for this deliverance. The rural districts are neither for the Bonapartes nor the Bourbons; they are naturally Monarchical, through the love of peace and work. As for the army it reflects all shades of opinion; it is undecided because its leaders are irresolute. On the day when statesmen and warriors have shaken hands, not to join in a conspiracy, but to agree in open day in order to set a noble example and speak in lofty language, then from one end of the country to the other an insurmountable current will raise the souls and minds of all, as the rising tide raises and floats off the ship which has grounded. The longer you delay the rescue the longer you keep sailors, pilots, and captains away from their place and rank, the more difficult you will render the work of rescue, and soon it will be impossible.

"To gain time is a term and expedient which is used with regard to invalids who are still strong, but is France a sick person of that kind? Is she not rather a dying person, not far from the death struggle, about whom the physician says to himself, 'I have not a moment to lose.'

"Dear friend, just run over our contemporary revolutions and see how swiftly we are nearing the abyss!

"In France the Republic has never drawn us nearer to each other, nor has she pacified or organised us. She has given us up to more and more bloody disorders. She has always sent us down many stages lower than when she took us. Therefore in my opinion it is puerile, even criminal, to argue that forms of government do not influence the destiny of a nation, and are worth the one as much as the other. There is in all history no more striking refutation of such a theory as ours, and only speaking of France nothing will ever prevent our three forms of

government from having each a character peculiar to it, and each having its own results, as certain trees bear certain fruits. In France nothing will prevent the Empire from being called a despotism, the Republic from being and from being called disorder, and the Bourbon Monarchy from meaning and being called representative government.

"You told the Empire that it had not a single fault left to commit; France says in her turn, 'I have no new revolution to undergo, no new experiment to endure. I have only the strength for one final struggle between life and death, and I have hardly that.'

"I might stop here, my friend, and I have doubtless exhausted your patience, but I wish to go still farther, to penetrate even to the innermost sanctuary of your conscience and to speak to you as I should do on my death-bed, if I were about to appear before God and felt myself freed from the passions and interests of this passing world by the nearness of eternity. I hope that my importunity will not vex you, but if it does for a little while I appeal to a calmer time approaching, being sure that then you will recognise that I have never shown you deeper and, let me add it, more patriotic friendship than I do now.

"As it is impossible for one to understand what secret cause has transformed the Monarchist I knew into an obstinate though temporary Republican, I venture to ask myself if any personal motive could have influenced your present political course. I need not tell you that by personal motive I do not mean a vain and idle ambition however one may express it. Supposing you to be in fault I only seek fault in the highest regions, and say to myself, 'He is the historian of the French Revolution, he was one of the chief men in the July Revolution. Does that constitute a yoke which he deems it incumbent on his dignity to bear to the end?'

"If such has been your error, dear friend, let me beg you to examine it with the utmost care, to make bare its last fallacies, and to show, while trampling it under foot, that you will not sacrifice the salvation of our country to it.

"I have a horror of the so-called justice of the world which takes pleasure in always recalling to a man some past sin of his, in chaining, even nailing him to it. Does God deal with the human race like that, or does He not rather, on the contrary, teach us what preciousness, what a sacred charm belongs to the heart which

conquers itself and seeks to efface what it repents of? We ought therefore to be no more bound by our own misdeeds than others ought to condemn us, under pretence of being logical, to be in error for life. At that rate it would have been necessary to banish Henry IV., who became a Catholic, because he was born a Protestant at Pau. It would have been right to send away the great Condé from the field of Senef because he had at one time drawn the sword against Louis XIV. In a word it would have been necessary to give back with disdain to the Revolution the genius and eloquence of Mirabeau, when he offered them to the Monarchy, because the first action in his political career was the oath of the Jeu de Paume. I have heard you say to yourself, dear friend, 'I should like to rewrite several pages of my history of the Revolution.' And, if I do not mistake, these pages have been erased and fresh ones to replace them are lying in your desk. Why should you fear to publish them now when your country is better prepared than ever to applaud them?

"Believe me, there will never be a good edition of your first volumes without one page headed, 'Close of the Revolutionary and Imperialist Period by the agreement of all the men who have been cured of these ideas, after eighty years of constantly increasing disaster in which they have all shared.' Do not let any other hand than yours write that page, for, rest assured, that he who writes it will be not only the true historian of France, but her true hero.

"France has voted with enthusiasm that your house shall be rebuilt, will you refuse to rebuild hers? France, in full enjoyment of her liberty, has given you what others have snatched from her by surprise or by force, why should you hesitate, rightly and freely deciding to give her a present and a future, unchangeably founded on the loyal alliance of force and freedom.

"Now, dear and illustrious friend, I do not beg your pardon, for if you have read my letter to the end, I shall know at least that the cause which I have at heart is won.

"Ever yours sincerely, and more than ever,

"Falloux."

The date of this letter was the date of the victory of our troops over the Commune, and this victory, though it cost great losses, was undeniable. But it

was not and could not be so if political victory did not advance hand in hand with it. It was at this moment that the faults of M. Thiers showed themselves, according to my idea, in a truly criminal light. Up to that time he could seriously and in good faith derive his arguments from the strength of anarchy and the weakness of society, but on the capitulation of Paris anarchy lost its head and society recovered all its freedom of action. M. Thiers was not blind to this progress, but he took advantage of it with a timidity that seemed to hide manœuvres and secret engagements and views selfish and unworthy of him. As for me, I could not keep in the silence of intimacy my ideas with regard to this. I said to M. Thiers, "You prefer the first place to acting the first part;" and I wrote every day to my friends in the Assembly, "You are letting yourselves be lulled into a deceitful security, and you will awake on the brink, if not at the bottom, of an abyss."

At Versailles, the Bishop of Orleans had at once won the authority which the dignity of his character and the austerity of his virtue, no less than his talent, gained him everywhere. A note from me was found among his papers; it is not dated, but was evidently written immediately after the horrors of the Commune. I quote it here, not as a personal testimony, but as testifying in favour of the Moderate Right, who have so often been accused, and who are still accused, with great ingratitude, of having been wanting in political foresight:—

"Dear Bishop,

"You do me a great honour in asking me to state my views on the future of our unfortunate country, and I obey you with great sadness, for alas! it seems to me easier to give reasons for anxiety than for hope.

"It is only necessary to cast one's eyes on the ascending or rather the descending scale of our revolutions, to judge how near we have approached to the gulf. In 1814 and 1815 the greatest events were accomplished by the hands of statesmen, without any intervention of the blind mob. In 1830 Paris alone revolts, and even in Paris this revolt is evidently the work of a minority. In 1848, the scenes of revolution and also the actors are multiplied, diminishing in value and intelligence, in proportion as their number increases. In 1870-1871 we touch barbarism almost, civil war is grafted on foreign war, with her own hands Paris destroys what the Prussian bombs have spared, and the purest blood flows without provocation, without pretext, solely in order to gratify stupid hatreds and ferocious passions.

"That would suffice to raise the alarm of all right-minded persons to its greatest height. But that is not all. A nation always contains in solution a certain dose of crimes and a certain number of scoundrels, but when these deplorable elements come to light they must encounter and be rebutted by almost universal condemnation. This was evinced in the days of June, 1848, but not in the far more terrible days of 1871. Everything is ripe for a new terror, which if it should take place would leave its predecessors far behind it. In 1793, there was still at times some kind of tribunal, some outward show of special pleading which let some victims escape, and maintained a sort of right to respect for human life, if not in fact, at least in principle. We need expect nothing like that; there will be neither curb nor form, men will rush upon each other, they will kill each other at the corners of the streets, as the wolf and the tiger spring on their prey at the corners of the forest. The murderer is armed and absolved beforehand by the theory which has been preached with impunity of vast reprisals against the whole of society. The priest, the soldier, the proprietor, are condemned solely by the fact of what they are, and every murderer is proclaimed beforehand to be the lawful agent of the highest national justice. Everything has conspired to land us in this desperate position. The deity has been attacked and ruined in men's consciences, as

law and order have been in their minds. Sixty years ago a Protestant was the extreme limit of opposition to Catholicism, then Christian Protestantism was struck down like Catholic Christianity, then deism and spiritualism were thrown into the same grave, and to-day the most cynical materialism serves as the starting-point, and, from a logical point of view, as the justification of all the enterprises undertaken by number and brute force against mind.

"With respect to such disasters, where is the resistance to party? Alas! there also the sight is heartrending. There is still division among the princes. Parties are more than ever given over to their prejudices and hatreds. The Count de Chambord believes that this is the moment to promulgate his personal and most inopportune inclinations. The Assembly was given full power to carry out a project which it formed; it does not dare to undertake the risk of carrying out one, not even that of an energetic electoral reform, and at any moment it may be compelled to face the country in a most compromised situation.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOPES OF MONARCHY—THE MANIFESTO FROM CHAMBORD (JULY 5TH).

1871.

Among the reproaches addressed to M. Thiers by several of my friends is that of having persistently sought to keep the princes away from the Assembly. He really did so, but for my part I do not blame him now and I did not then. When a man explains his conduct by alleging a good motive for it, one may be permitted to believe that there is another behind it, and to believe the latter to be the one that guides him; but it is not right to pass over the good motive in silence and treat it as if it did not exist. M. Thiers would, perhaps, have been less eloquent as to the grave disadvantages which would be caused by the presence of the Orleans princes in the Assembly, if he had not recognised in those two princes two rivals in the direction of the majority; but these disadvantages were none the less real, and struck many members of the Right who certainly could not take any personal

umbrage at the presence of the princes among them. It was then resolved to discuss the question with the whole royal family. M. de Saint-Victor, deputy of the Rhone, went to see the Count de Chambord, and returned with a favourable message of adhesion to the provisional programme of Bordeaux. The Duc Decazes, on his side, brought excellent news from the Orleans princes, but no precise promise of adhesion to the fusion. Both Legitimists and Orleanists were anxious to know the precise views of the Duc d'Aumale, whom his young nephews followed with great respect. Therefore, in order to gain information on this point, M. de Maillé, M. de Cumont, and M. de Meaux went of their own accord to the Duke, as announced to him by M. Bocher.

Their visit and their language produced a favourable result. The Count de Chambord, at the request of his personal friends, did not view with disfavour the idea of a journey to England in order to meet the Comte de Paris. This idea gave rise to some objections. "The interview is greatly to be desired," said some; "but it would be far better for it to take place on French soil. It would then be far more favourably received, and have much more value in the eyes of the country itself."

These objections gave rise to recriminations and ill-humour in the bosom of the Legitimist party, and one of those who undertook the most successfully to restore harmony between the two parties was the Duc d'Audiffret-Pasquier, who had the honour of entertaining the

Duc d'Aumale and the Prince de Joinville at his country house in the department of the Orne.

I have these details from a sure source, though I took no part in these negotiations, and it was only from the month of July that I became an eye-witness and almost an actor in the events which are about to be narrated.

When I arrived at Versailles towards the end of June it was with no political purpose, and it was absolutely impossible for me to foresee the unfortunate events which were about to take place. I had left Bourg-d'Iré with quite an opposite intention. M. Villemain was dead, and the French Academy were about to pay him the homage of adjourning the choice of his successor for some time, the customary sign of mourning. But it could brook no delay in the choice of a successor to the office of life-secretary which he had held. These are very active functions, which could not be allowed to lie idle without causing the greatest damage to the most important interests of the society. Several competitors came forward, or were proposed by their friends. These were M. Nisard, M. Patin, M. Saint-Marc Girardin, and M. Vitet. The two last would certainly have been elected if their legislative work had not bound them to political life. The struggle was thus between M. Nisard and M. Patin. I thought M. Patin the more suitable, and went to Paris to add my vote to those of my brother members, and this obtained his election on the 29th of June, 1871.

It is only a step from Paris to Versailles, and my friends who were settled there asked me to spend a few days with them. I could not possibly refuse, for I could not allege my habitual objection to Paris, which was the difficulty of finding a place free from noise. The Baronne de Fréville, née Moligny, had offered the Bishop of Orleans a large house with a beautiful garden in the Rue de Satory. This offer and the studious habits of the Bishop suited the requirements of my neuralgia perfectly. He went to bed at nine in the evening, rose at five, and was at his desk before six, immediately after saying mass. Nothing altered or disturbed this regularity of life. The door-bell was muffled, and whoever had a right to enter the house during the forbidden hours was provided with a key. I had one during my stay; for while the great heat of June and July lasted it was only in the evening that I could take a walk. I could thus introduce into this little bishopric of Orleans habits which were almost worldly, as I only came in at ten o'clock and rose at seven or eight in the morning. On the first day of my arrival at the Rue de Satory, Saturday, the 1st of July, I received a visit from M. de Castellane and M. de Meaux, who were both secretaries of the Assembly.

"You have come just in time," said they joyfully; "the Comte de Paris and the Duc de Chartres are to dine with M. Thiers to-day, and on Monday they leave for Belgium, where M. le Comte de Chambord is expecting them. This journey has been arranged between M. de Jarnac and M. de Lutteroth on behalf

of the princes, and M. de la Ferté as representing the Comte de Chambord."

"What good news," I exclaimed, "and how I regret that I am not able to congratulate them!"

"You must not fail to do so," answered they.

"But M. Thiers even does not know that I am here."

"Let him be told at once that you are here. He will immediately invite you to dinner with the rest of us, and you must not keep away on such a joyful occasion."

"I shall certainly not fail you," I said, "in the first place, because invitations to this dinner must be greatly envied, and also because I have never had the honour of being presented to any member of the house of Orleans, and I do not wish to appear as a too lagging or over hasty worshipper of the rising sun."

"Arrange everything by coming this evening," they persisted.

"The evening will remove my scruples about dinner, but not as to the rising sun. I have decided not to go, not, however, believe me, because of any want of interest in such an event; and if you are kind you will both come to-morrow morning and tell me all about the gathering."

They promised and kept their word. M. de Meaux arrived first. Before he opened his mouth I understood by his exultant bearing that all had happened that we could have desired.

He said, "It was the Monarchy that gave a recep-

tion in the house of the Republic. The princes stood in the middle of the reception room. The guests were presented to them by M. Thiers, who was no longer the master of the house. During dinner and throughout the evening all the conversation was of the reconciliation of the royal family. The princes announced publicly that they were leaving for Bruges, where M. le Comte de Chambord was at that time residing, and every one congratulated them most heartily."

"And what was the language of M. Thiers?" I asked, after having drunk in the smallest details as to the attitude of the two princes.

"Excellent! excellent!" answered M. de Meaux. "M. Thiers appeared delighted at the success of the two princes, and spoke in the highest terms of the chief of the royal house of France. Some one having remarked to him, 'M. le Comte de Chambord is the only one wanting at your dinner,' he replied quickly, 'M. le Comte de Chambord would have been welcome, and I do not despair of having that honour.'"

I spent the whole day with the Bishop of Orleans, indulging in this pleasant belief, and he rejoiced no less than I at the approaching restoration of the rightful Monarchy. How gracious of Providence to give us a Monarchy supported by a numerous and brave royal family, and by the almost unanimous adhesion of the greatest men of an Assembly perfectly free from all foreign pressure and spontaneously elected by universal suffrage! Could we not still hope in the great destinies of France, and dream of a great political

restoration for her, the prelude of her taking her place once more in Europe, and perhaps her revenge? We might hope everything that day, but on the morrow, alas! in a moment all our dreams had vanished, and given place to bitter despair. We received the copy of a note which had just been sent to the Comte de Paris. Never did so short a note produce a more dreadful effect:—

"The Comte de Chambord has been happy to hear of M. le Comte de Paris' wish to be received by him. The Comte de Chambord is in France. The moment which he himself indicated has arrived to explain himself fully on certain points which have not hitherto been touched upon.

"He hopes that nothing in his language will prove an obstacle to that union of the house of Bourbon which has always been his dearest wish.

"But honour forbids him to leave the princes, his cousins, in ignorance, and the Comte de Chambord thinks it best to ask M. le Comte de Paris to defer his visit until a day, in the near future, when he has fully explained his views to France. He should have wished to receive his cousins' visit at Chambord, but judges that this is not a fit moment to prolong his stay there.

"On leaving Chambord he will set out for Bruges, where he will remain from the 8th to the 16th of July.

"Blois, July 2nd, 1871."

After the dinner given by M. Thiers, and when the preliminaries of the royal reconciliation had reached so advanced a stage, the princes were forced to announce that an unforeseen obstacle, which had nothing to do with their own wish, prevented their departure. They did so with discretion, and said only what was absolutely necessary. The deepest consternation prevailed among those to whom the news was imparted. How

was it possible to conceal from ourselves that everything—fundamental ideas and outward forms—seemed to unite to rebuff the Orleans princes in their efforts for a reconciliation? The attention of France was at that time turned towards the Monarchy, and the larger majority were happy at the prospect of seeing the descendants of Henri IV. at last united, and the head of the house of France pressing to his heart that Robert the Strong whose dangers he could not share, but for whose youthful courage he could express his admiration. No, that magnificent sight was not reserved for us! It was only by a note in the third person, and couched in the coldest terms, that he announced his wish to have everything arranged and made public before seeing his cousins, before exchanging a single idea with them, before receiving and giving any pledge of confidence.

The first feeling among the members of the Assembly was that of incredulity. "It is impossible! it is impossible!" was echoed on all sides, and they clung obstinately to hope. Information was sought for, but fuller information only put the finishing touch to their despair.

It was discovered that before going to Chambord the Prince had passed twenty-four hours in Paris; that he had, strictly incognito, visited some of the sights and received some of his friends, among others the Marquis de la Ferté, president of the Royalist Committee of Paris. M. de la Ferté was a man who, at the least sign of the King, would have risked his life without hesitation, and who had often sacrificed

his own private convictions to his ideas of passive obedience. On this occasion, however, the imminence of the danger had given him strength for resistance, and had for the first time wrung from him an expression of alarm in the midst of his devotedness. Having stated every objection, M. de la Ferté refused to remain the official interpreter of the retrogade policy, which was to be inaugurated by the proclamation of the white flag. The Prince became angry, the faithful servant persisted and begged in vain. The scene had begun like one of those noble arguments between Henri IV. and Sully which are so admired in history, but which had, alas! another ending. The Prince and his faithful servant parted never to meet again.

With the consent and probably at the wish of M. le Comte de Chambord, M. and Madame de la Ferté had taken a house at Versailles, in order to maintain continual communication with the members of the Assembly. M. de la Ferté returned thither at once after his sad audience, and went immediately to the house of the Bishop of Orleans, whose friend he had been for many years. Not being able to meet him, he came to my rooms and found there several deputies, among them M. de Cumont. We questioned him anxiously, he answered frankly; while he was speaking the tears flowed down his cheeks. These tears would have had their own eloquence even without words, for M. de la Ferté, a man of tall and commanding presence, was, both by nature and descent, essentially a soldier. He had proved that during the days

of June, 1848. A young mobile of Paris, scarcely sixteen years old, sprang upon a barricade to seize a red flag, but fell back, hit by a ball. Seeing M. de la Ferté spring forward to seize it—

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "you art lucky, you big National Guard; you will haul down the flag!"

"No, my lad! it will not be I!" and, taking him in his arms, he put the flag in his hand and came down with this glorious double burden before the rebels had risked another volley.

It is easy to understand how the emotion of such a man gains on others. M. de Cumont and I have often spoken of this since. But M. de la Ferté's visit had one object; he wished to inform the Bishop of Orleans, and told us personally that the Prince was going to Chambord in order to publish a manifesto there, and that this manifesto ignored the agreement entered into in a letter to the Duc de Nemours in 1857 that he would arrange the question of the flag in France and in concert with France. As long as the manifesto had not appeared it might be averted, and in any case nothing ought to be neglected that might prevent its appearing.

This news spread everywhere like wildfire. The greater number of the deputies of the Right, regardless of slight differences, met in the committee rooms of the Assembly and resolved to send a deputation to Chambord at once. They fixed upon three Royalists distinguished not only by personal character but by name—le Duc de la Rochefoucauld-Bisaccia, the

Comte de Maillé, the Vicomte de Gontaut-Biron. They left that very evening. "Do say plainly," they were entreated, "that to sign the manifesto would be to sign his abdication, or the certain collapse of a restoration of the Monarchy."

At the same time I was urged to entreat the Bishop of Orleans to set out also for Chambord. He had conducted the religious education of the Prince when he was a child, and had kept up a frequent correspondence with him. "If political motives," he was told, "fail to convince him in the mouth of our political ambassadors, religious motives will always be more powerful in the mouth of a bishop." The Bishop refused to comply with these entreaties at first. It would be necessary to set out and to travel in the night; nothing was more opposed to his habits. I urged him, however, and with such persistency that I obtained his promise of departure. Almost at the same hour, M. Laurentie, who was almost eighty years of age, left Paris, while M. de Cazenove de Pradines, a young deputy of the extreme Right, still gory, as one might say, from the battle of Patay, where the two Bouillés, his father-in-law and his brother-in-law, had bequeathed him at their death the defence of the glorious flag of the Zouaves of Charette, started from Versailles. I have never seen, and there never will be seen again, such complete unanimity in despair.

It was all to no purpose. M. Laurentie, M. de Cazenove de Pradines, the three delegates of the Right representing the most glorious recollections of the past

and the most unchangeable loyalty, the Bishop of Orleans, recalling to his mind the danger incurred by the Church if the long series of revolutionary governments continued—all met with the same reception from the Comte de Chambord; great courtesy, great calmness, a confidence which would discuss nothing, and appeared to spring from some supernatural vision. Even the members of his household, who were usually so docile, were no less anxious than others about this state of mind, and foresaw so clearly the consequences of it that one of the most distinguished among them said to the new arrivals, "Strain every nerve to succeed, or all is lost."

The Prince remained inflexible. He would not even grant the delay which was despairingly asked of him, in order to allow Royalist France the time to send him one more supplication. M. Laurentie set out on his way back to Paris without concealing his sorrow, and wrote to M. de Larcy, "We have lost in twenty-four hours the fruit of twenty years' prudence."

MM. de la Rochefoucauld, de Gontaut, and de Maillé drew up a report of their audience at Chambord, and read it to a large number of their colleagues who were assembled at the residence of M. de Rességuier. I had the mournful honour of being admitted to hear this communication. The language held by the delegates of the Royalist party was exactly rendered in it, and if this report is destined to be the last will and testament of the old French aristocracy, it would be impossible to imagine a more patriotic or noble one.

On his return to Versailles the Bishop of Orleans said sadly to us—

"I have just been viewing an unprecedented moral phenomenon. A more thorough moral blindness has never been seen."

Although the different arrivals from Chambord made no secret of the check they had received, we would not yet yield to despair. We clung to the hope that silence and night would bring reflection. We would hope against hope that the manifesto would not appear at once. This hope was dispelled as soon as the post arrived. On the 6th of July the evening papers brought the manifesto of Chambord to Versailles.

It only too clearly realised our fears. Here is the text of it:—

"FRENCHMEN,

"I am among you. You have opened the gates of France to me, and I have not been able to deny myself the happiness of once more seeing my country, but I will not by prolonging my stay give fresh pretext for the troubling of men's minds which are so agitated just now.

"Because of this I leave that Chambord which you gave me, and of which for forty years I have proudly worn the title while wandering as an exile.

"On leaving I wish to tell you that I am not separating from you; France knows that I belong to her.

"I cannot forget the right to Monarchy which is the inheritance of the nation, nor can I decline the duties towards her which this imposes on me. I shall fulfil these duties, believe me, on the word of an honest man and a king.

"By the help of God we will build up together, when you will, a government suitable to the real necessities of the country, on the wide foundations of administrative decentralisation and local franchise.

"We will give as guarantees of those public liberties to which all Christian nations have a right, universal suffrage honestly exercised and the control of the two chambers, and we will resume the national movement of the end of the last century, restoring to it its true character.

"A minority which rebelled against the desires of the country made that the starting point of a period of demoralisation through lying and of disorganisation through violence. These criminal attempts forced the Revolution on a nation which only asked for reforms, and have from that time impelled it towards the abyss in which but yesterday it would have perished but for the heroic efforts of our army.

"The working classes, the workers in field and city, whom fate has made the objects of my liveliest interest and dearest studies, have suffered the most from this social disorder.

"But France, cruelly enlightened by unparalleled disasters, will understand that a change of error is not a return to truth, that it is not possible by means of expedients to escape from eternal necessities.

"She will call me and I shall become hers entirely, with my devotion, my principles, and my flag.

"With regard to this flag, conditions have been spoken of which I ought not to endure.

"Frenchmen! I am ready to do anything to help my country to arise from her ruins, and to take her rightful place once more among other nations. The only sacrifice which I cannot make to her is that of my honour.

"I belong to my time and wish to do so. I render sincere homage to all its greatness, and whatever might have been the colour of the flag under which our soldiers have marched, I have admired their heroism, and thanked God for all that their bravery has added to the treasure of the glories of France.

"Between you and myself neither misunderstanding nor afterthought ought to exist. No, I will not let the flag of Henri IV., of Francis I., and of Joan of Arc be snatched from my hands, because ignorant and credulous persons have spoken of absolute power or intolerance, of tithes, of forced public labour, of feudal rights—phantoms which the most impudent bad faith tries to bring again to life before your eyes.

"It is with this flag that national unity arose, it is with it that your ancestors, led by mine, conquered that Alsace and

that Lorraine whose fidelity will be the consolation for our misfortunes.

"It has conquered barbarism on that African soil which witnessed the first exploits of the princes of my house, it will conquer the new barbarism with which the world is threatened?

"I will confide it to the valour of our army without a single fear. This army knows that it has never followed any but the way of glory.

"I received it as a sacred deposit from the old king, my grandfather, when he was dying in exile. I have never been able to separate it from the remembrance of my absent country; it waved above my cradle, I wish it to shade my tomb. Enwrapped in the glorious folds of this spotless banner, I will bring you order and liberty.

"Frenchmen! Henri V. will not abandon the white flag of Henri IV.

"Henri.

"Chambord, July 5th."

The Bishop of Orleans received this manifesto as we were rising from table. We read it with unutterable pain, and without exchanging a word. A few minutes after came M. Vitet, exclaiming, "O blood of Charles X.!" and remained a long time silent, with his head in his hands. M. Saint-Marc Girardin joined us a little while after. Like ourselves he was in a state of consternation. "We were so happy," he said, "to know that we were reconciled to each other at last, and to work out side by side the regeneration of our country? What will become of France, and how henceforth direct her destinies?"

M. de Rességuier lived in the Rue des Reservoirs, opposite to the Palace of the Assembly. A great number of the deputies of the Right met at his house in the afternoon of the sixth. There were to be seen

among others, M. de la Rochefoucauld, M. de Juigné, M. de Kerdrel, M. de Larcy, M. de Meaux, M. de Lacombe, M. Baragnon, M. Depèyre, M. de Castellane, M. de Maillé, and M. de Gontaut. They were good enough to admit me. Several widely different opinions were uttered. But they all came to this—not to be responsible with regard to an act which every one thought to show a complete misunderstanding of the state of France.

Some by-elections had taken place in the month of June. Contrary to public expectation almost all the newly elected deputies were Republicans, and the statement of their political faith was greatly strengthened by a recent letter from the Comte de Chambord; this was much to be regretted, but the manifesto dated July 5th went far beyond it. And not only would this new manifesto render monarchist elections impossible in most of the departments, but some even of the deputies present in Versailles spoke of sending in their resignations. M. de Carayon Latour was among these. Another representative, one of the principal proprietors of the Royalist newspapers of Le Mans, protested vehemently against the arrival of the Comte de Chambord's manifesto in the provinces without being accompanied by some kind of document which should clearly set forth the disagreement of the Right with it. This proposal was eagerly seconded by all the deputies who had to do with the press in the departments; but it would be necessary to weigh and discuss carefully the terms of this protest. It was

decided to deliberate more calmly and in greater number. They settled to meet that very evening at M. de la Rochefoucauld's, in the Hotel des Réservoirs.

Every one was punctual, and at nine in the evening about eighty members of the Right were assembled. I was honoured with a special invitation, and I did not refuse it, for it was not simply a matter connected with a resolution of the Assembly, but which touched the existence and honour of the whole Royalist party. We perceived the necessity of a regular debate, and the chair was taken by the Comte Benoist d'Azy, vice-president of the Assembly. M. Ernoul spoke first, but without drawing any conclusions. M. du Temple, a very eccentric deputy of the Ille-et-Vilaine, said rather vaguely that France would give a better reception to the manifesto than we thought, and he supported his hypothesis by these words: "Credo quia absurdum."

This special pleading in the name of the absurd was not taken seriously. M. de Gontaut proposed to draw up a short and clear statement, dwelling on the letter of the Count de Chambord to the Duc de Nemours, and contesting the right of the Prince to settle by himself a question without the help of France which was promised and was besides indispensable for its decision. A member pointed out that M. de Larcy was the bearer of a proposal drawn up in concert with several of his colleagues. He was asked to read it. It was heard with sympathy, and M. de Gontaut supported it with his usual good grace. I supported it warmly, but I asked for the addition of a slight amend-

ment. It was agreed that five of the members should retire to a neighbouring apartment, and return during the sitting with a letter written in the clearest terms setting forth our views. The five members chosen were MM. de la Rochefoucauld, de Larcy, de Cumont, de Meaux, and myself. Being thoroughly agreed as to the sentiments, we were soon agreed as to the expression of them, and in a few minutes we brought the following draft:—

"M. le Comte de Chambord has a right to his own convictions.

"However they may be judged, no one will deny them the character of sincerity, rising to sacrifice and inspiring reverence.

"After as before the appearance of this weighty document, the men who are attached to the principle of a hereditary and representative monarchy, because they see in it a guarantee of the salvation of their country, remain devoted to the interests and liberties of France. As they deeply respect her will, they will not separate themselves from the flag which she has chosen, a flag rendered glorious through the courage of the soldiers who have fought under it. and which has become the banner of social order, in opposition to the bloody banner of anarchy."

In the draft of M. de Larcy the second sentence stopped short at the word "sacrifice," implying—that was the thought of all—sacrifice even to that of abdication if it became necessary. The addition which I asked, and which was readily granted me, was, "and which inspires reverence;" for I thought then, and I still think, that abdication would have been a generous act, worthy of all the admiration and gratitude of the country.

M. de Fresneau was the only one who spoke against

the draft, but vaguely. He had only a short while before abandoned very moderate opinions in order to adopt those of the extreme Right.

Such a discussion was painful to all, and there was a general desire to end it. The vote was put almost immediately. The show of hands was for the adoption; no hand was raised when the contrary was put to the vote. At most three or four members abstained in silence from voting.

As soon as the voting was over some of us hastened to the telegraph to send our note to the departments, others joined the members of the Right Centre in the great hall of the Hotel des Réservoirs, where the meetings of both sections of the united majority were held. The result of the discussion was warmly received by those who had not taken part in it; they were deeply touched, and understood that patriotism had overcome all weakness in the accomplishment of this painful duty.

CHAPTER XV.

AFTER THE CHAMBORD MANIFESTO.

1871.

The agitation caused by the cruel surprise with which the manifesto of July 5th was received was so widespread that the most serious results might be expected. The invisible group of nameless counsellors who had led the Prince into this mistake had certainly promised him another result. Such an evident disappointment must have thrown a strong light upon the tendency of their counsels, so they sought by every means in their power to give the lie to the evidence, and to save their worthless credit at all costs.

The *Union* had accompanied the royal manifesto with a very cold and embarrassed comment, but M. Laurentie was not in the habit of long resisting certain influences, and he went rapidly from coldness to enthusiasm. At the same time private correspondents took the field. M. de la Ferté, M. de Circourt, and M. de Belleval had sent in their resignation, after the painful altercation of which I have already spoken between the Prince and M. de la Ferté. These three

resignations were at first denied, then softened and explained away in all the versions of it with which the provinces were flooded. Then a complete romance was invented, according to which M. le Comte de Chambord, surrounded by dark intrigues, had been obliged to defend his personal honour as well as his royal dignity, and could only do so by the solemn manifestation of the 5th of July. This story could not stand the test of an examination by disinterested persons. It was wanting in the commonest good sense as well as in truth. If there existed in the old Orleanist party certain men who dreamt of setting aside the rightful sovereign, what greater satisfaction could M. le Comte de Chambord give them than by shutting with his own hand the gates of France ready to open to him? This absurd romance, circulated by hints and innuendoes, was far more successful than plain right and justice have been for a long time in our poor country. I do not think a stranger sight was ever to be seen, never was the direction of a boat more quickly changed by one stroke of the oar.

By chance I had witnessed the whole occurrence, and had participated in it. I saw, and so to speak in the twinkling of an eye, all that untruth may aim at and win. For instance, I saw the arrival at Nantes, one of the most ardent centres of legitimism, of a letter from one of the most distinguished deputies of the Loire-Inférieure. This condolence four pages long ended with these very words, "All is lost, lost, lost!" Three or four days after I read in a letter

written by the same hand, "My mistake has been explained to me. M. le Comte de Chambord has been miserably deceived, and I see clearly that he only did right to defend himself." Deceived, what! deceived! and by whom? No one could say. No one explained how what proved the ruin of the Comte de Chambord also injured his deceivers.

Some of those who were indignant wished to protest. M. de la Ferté wrote a letter which I have read in manuscript but which he tore up, partly through pride, partly through an affection which was invincible. He had as strong a dislike to defend himself as to accuse any one else. How could any one fail to be touched by, even while deploring, a condescension which was so unselfish and had so much excuse! But how were the propagators of calumny, the men who could deceive themselves by lying excuses, to be excused. How could any one understand that old servants of royalty like M. Laurentie and M. Poujoulat changed their tone so entirely in a few days? They denied utterly what they had written and thought. I do not say it was without remorse, for they still believed what they no longer wrote, and they sought relief in speaking to each other in private.

In 1872 and 1873 one of the writers on the staff of the *Union*, and editor of the chief part of the news made public by the Royalist newspapers in the provinces, came to see me in Paris, but I had five or six visitors, so that we could have no private conversation.

Some one having remarked, "What news have you had from the Count de Chambord?"

"M. le Comte de Chambord is dead!" said he.

"What! is he dead?" cried everybody anxiously.

"Alas! it is too true! for France no longer thinks of him, and he will never see her again!"

"But you do not say that in your letters to the provincial newspapers."

"Oh! I should think not."

This was in my house and in the presence of witnesses.

Here is another occurrence of the same kind of which I am as certain as if I had been present. The Archbishop of Paris and the Papal Nuncio went with the family and friends of M. Poujoulat into the vestry on the occasion of his daughter's marriage. Politics were alluded to, and the name of the Comte de Chambord was invoked as a watchword for the future. M. Poujoulat replied with his customary solemnity, "The Count de Chambord has no future. It is not possible twice to treat a miracle as if it did not exist!"

Now it was by the confidence that every one had in M. Laurentie and M. Poujoulat that the calumnies which misled the political and moral sense of so many Legitimists gained ground. I have many a time said to those who, with the utmost good faith, were on the wrong side—

"Can you not see that they are playing with you, and that the *Union* and its satellites never support their assertions with a shadow of proof."

"The word of the editors of the *Union* and the newspapers of their particular party in our departments are enough for us. You ought to be much obliged to them for their reserve."

"This so-called reserve is only another name for their not being able to justify their statements."

This conversation has many times been repeated. I gained nothing by it except to be considered an Orleanist by my simple and obstinate opponents.

God knows that I neither despised certain outbursts of generous feeling nor attractions with regard to the men whose career, already a long one, had been dedicated to a single cause. I can understand how attractive the idea of sacrifice must be to men who have resolved to bury themselves beneath the ruins with M. le Comte de Chambord, like the valiant knights of old in desperate combats, where they sought only honour or death. But those knights only sacrificed themselves, they did not sacrifice their country, they did not insult nor speak evil of any one. They did not refuse to die, they would have refused to lie.

Patriotism may show itself equally sincere, though not equally far-seeing, in two different lines of conduct, in the one case to follow the king and cover his retreat, or in the other to try to stop the king in a course in which he would lose at once both crown and country. According to my idea there was no choice but between these two straight lines. But it was not possible to invent a third, a winding path, to

recant in order to mislead public opinion; without conviction, paid to order, oh! that was impossible!

At such a crisis what would be the attitude of M. Thiers? He had hesitated a long time before embarking on the restoration of the Monarchy when the wind was favourable. Was it to be hoped that he would embark through pure devotion when he was certain of shipwreck? M. Thiers was resigned to the Count de Chambord's return, but it had cost him an effort. Two sentiments had sustained him: his old sympathy for the Orleans princes to whom the grandson of Charles X. would leave a much stronger throne, and the conviction which he had felt for quite as long a time that France had no better means of salvation than the return of the Monarchy. But it would be too much for M. Thiers to see the Orleans princes disdainfully held aloof, and to see the restored Monarchy begin by breaking with modern society and forcing a symbol which it did not want on the nation. It would not do to subject him to such a temptation.

I was under no illusion with regard to him. I arrived at Versailles with an earnest desire to see him once more. I was still more anxious to congratulate him on the attitude he had taken with regard to the Comte de Paris and the Duc de Chartres. On the 6th of July my eagerness had vanished as well as my hopes. I hesitated then to return to the Presidency, where I had seen M. Thiers only for a moment on the morning of the 5th, and when nothing in the sky

announced the thunderbolt which was so soon to fall. At first I remained a prey to the profoundest sorrow, then I devoted myself entirely to the anxieties and deliberations of the Right. In certain states of mind and heart we do not desire to see those who cannot think and feel with us, and nothing had as yet roused me from this state when I was called to the President's by an unforeseen incident. The Duchesse de Galliera, daughter of the Marquis de Brignole, formerly Sardinian ambassador to Paris, and the Marquise de Castellane, niece of the Prince de Talleyrand, wished to come to Versailles together and be present at a sitting of the Assembly in the palace of Louis XIV., and had announced to M. Thiers that they would first call on him. They had known him intimately for many years, the one through the strong friendship of her father for the former Minister of Louis Philippe, the other through the frequent visits of her uncle's young *protégé* to the house in the Rue Saint-Florentin, where he had learned from the famous diplomatist lessons which were destined to render his brilliant pupil famous. An engagement was made; I was kindly told of it, and did not wish to miss a double meeting of which I was very glad.

When I went to M. Thiers' house he was already, as well as Madame Thiers, engaged in very cordial conversation with his two visitors. He even told them frankly that it was displeasing to him to become the second in a country when he was the first and master everywhere. When he saw me he came towards me,

holding out both hands in a most friendly manner, and he hardly allowed me to greet the three ladies present before he began on the political question, which I had promised myself to avoid on that occasion.

"Well!" said he, "the Comte de Chambord manages his affairs in a very strange way! For my part I did not wish for the return of the Orleans princes, for I thought it imprudent and premature, but it is the doing of the Comte de Chambord and of the Legitimists, who, opening the gates of France to them, have brought them to Versailles, where they are increasingly popular both with the army and the members of the Chamber. Now, M. le Comte de Chambord turns suddenly against his cousins and upsets everything. I am accused of wishing to found the Republic! Now I am free from all reproach; henceforth no one will be able to deny that the true founder of the Republic in France is M. le Comte de Chambord. Posterity will speak of him as the French Washington."

"Perhaps what you say is hardly generous, and there are more ways than one of answering it," I replied; "but I prefer to take you at your word, and since you confess yourself that the final settlement is adjourned, let us only think how to make the best use of the temporary Government which is at present accepted by every one."

"Ah! ladies, I see what he is aiming at, and if I like I could easily tell you what he is going to speak about."

"Well! do so. These ladies will profit greatly by it, and I shall gain greatly by having my thoughts uttered by you."

"Well! he has come to tell me that he and his friends will be delighted with the provisional state of things, provided it leads to the settlement they desire. They do not know that the Orleanists have just told me the same thing, and the Republicans as well. Henceforth I can only try to keep the provisional Government from all parties, and to consider myself simply as an accountant in bankruptcy, or a sentinel having no other watchword than to prevent the different parties from falling upon and devouring each other."

"I am sorry to tell you that that is not at all what I intended to say. I have anxieties and thoughts which are quite other than these. I came to tell you that it is quite useless to think of a settled government if the provisional continues on the same footing. Society will no longer exist for any one, and we are hastening towards an abyss in which all ultimatums and personal ambitions will be swallowed up without distinction."

"That is a gross exaggeration, and one of those party sayings to which you ought to attach no importance."

"No; there is no exaggeration or party spirit in it, for parties are at this moment in abeyance. Formerly you were, I know, much frightened by direct and final universal suffrage, such as M. Ledru-Rollin gave us in 1848; so that I should be much astonished if you

were without anxiety as to what was happening to-day. I rarely allow myself to utter axioms, but here is one which I assure you is irrefutable: in the country universal suffrage will belong to the wineshops, and in the towns to the International, which latter belongs not only to the passions of the mob but to cosmopolitan influences, and therefore to foreign hostility, arranging from one end of the country to another to blow up the whole of France. This is very perceptible in my department, which is justly reckoned one of the best. It is certainly the same everywhere, and I tell you plainly that it is formidable!"

"I deny absolutely all these statements, and I deny above all what you impute to foreign influence. All the Cabinets are one with me in putting down the International, and Prince Bismarck among them. Trochu did not know what he was saying when he stated that Prussia had had a hand in the Commune. It is absolutely false, and no conduct can be more loyal than that of Prussia for the last three months."

"I do not know anything about Prince Bismarck's doings nor about those of any foreign Cabinets, but I do see what happens about me, and I can swear to some very powerful and active influence being on foot. It is the workmen who do not work that have most money, and our country-side is invaded by sham beggars who refuse alms. It is therefore very plain that there is an organisation which strikes deep and far. We may make a mistake about certain proper

names, but there can be no mistaking the nature and importance of the danger. I thought you were seeking for a remedy, but I had not the least idea that you would deny that there is any malady, and your optimism adds greatly to my terror."

"It is not optimism, it is good sense; the International is conquered, it is hunted down from one end of Europe to the other. You may be easy about it, I have my eye upon everything, I answer for everything."

"Your eye is the Government officials, and that eye has always been, in France, very short-sighted. You are surrounded here by all the insignia of public power; you are in the midst of a mirage; take the word of an old 'rural' for it. I invented the 'rurals' long before the word became fashionable, and that is why I dare, without presumption, to contradict you so boldly. If it were only a question of speculative politics I should not have the impertinence to give you my ideas on it, but this is a question of facts, plain facts, which I see more closely and consequently better than you."

"Ah! you also attack the officials. You are like Rességuier, who telegraphs from his department that if the elections are bad everywhere it is the fault of the Government."

"If you invited M. de Rességuier to tell you what was going on in the Gers, you would soon see that he has every reason to speak and write as he does; but it is not he whom you will ask about his department,

and that is the reason you always hear the same flattering note."

"Oh, the ingratitude of parties! I have given more than ten prefects to the Legitimists and yet they are not contented!"

"You must give prefects neither to the Orleanists nor to the Legitimists, but to the cause of order, and ten prefects appointed to the cause of order are far below the mark, we must have eighty! But do not let us speak any more of the prefects. You have alluded yourself with admiration to the independence of the majority. You know very well that it is composed of those who are neither on the look out for places nor engaged in any intrigue, and that in order to satisfy them you would only have to govern according to the principles that they find most useful to the country."

"Oh! now you tell me that I do not know how to govern, that I am neither worthy to govern nor capable of doing so!"

M. Thiers rose and began to walk up and down the drawing-room in great anger, and getting thoroughly excited he exclaimed—

"Oh, yes! I know what they want, they want my place. Well, let them take it! I am ready to hand it over to any one who wants it. To-day, when all danger is over, everybody wants to step into it, and your friends have courage enough for that now!"

In my turn I rose angrily, and going towards him—

"Monsieur Thiers," I said, "you have already

said that in a speech in the Assembly, and I thought you were ashamed of it, but I warn you that I shall not allow it to be repeated before me!"

M. Thiers stopped short, and I must say that it was with an appearance of sincerity that he added—

"Of course, when I speak of courage I understand by that the courage to accept office, and really it needs a great deal. Far be it from me to mean by that anything which could be understood as an attack on the military or political courage of your friends; they have all given admirable pledges of that, and no one does them more justice than I."

The latter part of the conversation had become so vehement on both sides that Madame de Galliera, Madame de Castellane, and Madame Thiers, who had shown pleasure at the commencement of it, probably fearing that their presence would excite further recriminations, went away, and M. Thiers, who was walking rapidly to and fro, only accompanied them some steps in the drawing-room. Then he returned to me saying—

"See, I am going frankly to repeat to you the reproaches that I address to your friends. They are hunting for popularity, they accuse me of not using power, and they continually weaken that power; they are playing fast and loose, and they afterwards accuse me. Just look at their law on decentralisation. It is an absurd law. My friends hold me back from going to the Assembly. I should cause a scandal there; I should cut their measure to pieces. What is

this departmental commission. It is an invention to worry the prefects. It will be impossible to govern with a machine like that."

"We cannot undertake to convert each other on the question of decentralisation; but you have chosen a bad example to show that my friends are courting a worthless popularity. Surely that is not helping both sides without being true to either, as you would justly call a criminal and vain speculation on bad passions. Ever since the Revolution decentralisation has had the first place on our programmes, under every Government, in the press, in the orator's desk; and the contrary has been such a failure until now, that I am astonished to see you so unmoved and untroubled on the subject. So bring forward other examples to show me how my friends have systematically sought to undermine your power."

"They are doing it now in the bill on the press, they have done it in the law on the court-martials, which Dufaure laid on the table."

"The bill on the court-martials has not yet been discussed, and the objections in the committees have only been with regard to points of law. As for your bill on securities, they object to it as inefficacious, and not because they fear repression."

"As for me I wanted very high security, in order to destroy a good many newspapers. I cared very little about the fines, and I did not conceal that my object was to strike directly at the existence of a crowd of journals. Well, one of your friends, and one of your

personal friends, has just attacked the law of securities. It is M. de Castellane, and I am glad that his mother is no longer here, as I should not have liked to pain her."

"How can you exaggerate unimportant parliamentary occurrences so much. Antoine de Castellane has chosen a subject which he thought suitable, but he certainly never had the intention to destroy your bill, and he began by saying himself that by his amendment he separated from most of his friends."

"That is true! that is true! We know what youth is, and must not be hard on it; therefore I am not vexed with him, but it is none the less a symptom."

"No, it is not a symptom, it is an isolated personal action. The majority would certainly not refuse you a regular law on the press which should assure large precautions for the defence of society, and which should, for instance, allow for special judges instead of petty fines, which, whether put at your figure or that of the amendments, only destroy the good journals and let the bad ones live, consecrating them even by a sort of monopoly. We are therefore right in saying that you have brought forward no measure on any subject which may be regarded as frankly for the preservation of society. It is true that laws of this kind are not to be improvised; and for my part, if you had not yourself turned the conversation, through an excitement which I could not foresee and which I did not call forth into a fresh channel, I never thought of reproaching you for the laws which you have not

made, but simply to ask you why you used the laws that already existed so little, or not at all. Thus, with regard to the press, you allow entire impunity to papers which justify the most odious crimes and send forth thinly disguised incitals to civil war; on the other hand, you allow vagabonds and hawkers to become openly the agents of an approaching 'jacquerie,' and almost everywhere your National Guards remain on the same footing as after the 4th of September; that is to say, the good regiments disarmed, and the bad ones, on the contrary, well armed and ready to fight."

"Ah! now you also want me to disband the National Guard. Well, you ask me for civil war, and I will not begin another. No, I will never again pass such dreadful days and nights as I did during the siege of Paris."

All these last sentences, of which I only give the substance here, were also pronounced in a tone of great anger.

"What!" I retorted, "it is you who are speaking thus, when Jules de Lasteyrie said to me a few minutes ago, 'I who am the grandson of the National Guard, I ask for its dissolution and shall vote for it.'" (M. de Lasteyrie was the grandson of M. de la Fayette). "Before replying to you, M. Thiers, I wish to express my astonishment and my resolve. I am astonished to see the oldest and most illustrious of our parliamentary men arrive at such a pitch of irritable despotism that he will no longer endure the shadow of an objection, even the most respectful and friendly. Formerly I heard you, with great admiration, say, 'My life is a

research.' How can you select the moment when so many responsibilities are weighing on you to close the inquiry? My resolve is not to be stopped by your anger, whether it is real or pretended. You know that I am perfectly disinterested."

"True, true! you are only too much so. If you had chosen to come to the Assembly I should have put you in the Ministry with Larcy."

"Since I have been listening to you I congratulate myself on not having entered the Ministry, for certainly I should not have remained in it. I am perfectly apart, not only from vulgar ambition, but even from party spirit, for you know I am not blind to the faults of my friends, and I grieve deeply over them. Therefore it is only through conscience and patriotism that I give myself the pain of contradicting and vexing you. I shall speak out, and you will listen to all I have to say. Well, Monsieur Thiers, you made a mistake about Paris on the 18th of March."

"I never made a mistake about Paris."

"You have acknowledged it yourself."

"I have never acknowledged it, never!"

"What, never? Here is the *Moniteur*." And placing my hand under his eyes as if it were the *Journal Officiel*, I resumed—

"You said when speaking in the Chamber that the rebels in Paris were isolated and few in number. Later on you were obliged to confess, and you did confess, that there were a great many of them, and that they were far from being isolated. I have the right there-

fore to say to you to-day, 'Take care not to make the same mistake, and be forced once more, but too late, to make the same confession.' As you were deceived about Paris on the 18th of March you are making a mistake about the departments. Your first error brought on us the horrors of the Commune, your second will inevitably lead to catastrophes more widespread and far more disastrous. You told me very unjustly just now that I came to ask you for civil war. No, we do not ask you for it; on the contrary, we wish to avert it; and it is you who prepare it, you who render it inevitable as well as bloody."

"But what can I do that I am not already doing? You speak of disbanding the National Guards, but let me tell you I have been imprudent enough to disband the National Guards at Lyons and Marseilles."

"What, you call political imprudence the disbanding of a National Guard that shoots its own commanders and lays siege to your prefects? But then, how do you understand the defence of society and the primary duty of every Government—to repress force?"

"No doubt, no doubt, we have full power to act as we did at Lyons and Marseilles, and when we have the same cause we will act so again."

"But you force me from one surprise to another, and your theory is still more terrifying than your practice, as you must have enormities like those of Lyons and Marseilles to induce you to take precautionary measures. Thus you are condemning France to see civil

war and blood flowing in torrents in all her cities, one after the other."

"I do not say that, I do not say that, only I say that a body of the National Guard must have been openly in the wrong before I should disband it, and I cannot find out which, according to you, are the good and the bad regiments. What you call good others call bad, so what would you have me do?"

"Ah! Monsieur Thiers, let me tell you again, I thought that you were in the midst of difficulties as to the measures to be taken, in which each of us ought to help you not only by information but by his patience. Unhappily, I perceive that we have not arrived at that. I see that it is your idea even and your system that we have to combat. Then there is a gulf between us. See to what you are reduced. You have just declared to me that you have no longer any rule by which to recognise the good and the bad, that you have no difference to make between the testimony of Conservatives and that of demagogues, that what some call good others call bad, and there is no longer for you either good or evil, and that your scepticism will only take warning on the day when the whole country is in flames. Well! so be it; you want this satisfaction, you will have it. Never will a society more sharply assailed have been worse defended. You wish its death, it will perish; but dying, it will have a right to address to you a last and ineffaceable curse, for it counted on you to defend it, and it had given you the means to do so. I leave you heartbroken. I

feel that my country is irrevocably deceived in what she expected. Ah, Monsieur! what a beautiful page in history you deny yourself."

Thereupon I left him, and he followed me with bent head and worn-out appearance, murmuring under his breath, "You exaggerate, you exaggerate!" but no longer protesting and retorting. He took my hand as I opened the door of the second drawing-room, across which he had accompanied me.

M. Thiers and I only separated when we were out of patience, and when I regained my usual calmness I felt a real remorse when I thought of his age and the state of prostration in which I had left him. I was to dine with him the next day. I told all the particulars of our discussion to the Bishop of Orleans, asking him if it would not be better for me to keep away from that dinner.

"Do not," replied the Bishop, whose religious expectations have, alas! been sadly deceived. "You and I must never break with M. Thiers, and we must be by his bedside, among the friends of his dying hour! His good qualities are greater than his faults; we must help him to the end in this struggle against himself."

I still hesitated, when the thought came into my mind to visit M. de Larcy, who was in the Cabinet, and to whom M. Thiers always showed great affection. As I went in M. de Larcy said—

"I was just going to you to ask you what passed between you and M. Thiers yesterday. We held a

Council early this morning as usual. M. Thiers came to me and said, "I have strange news to give you. Falloux has become a fanatic, and yesterday we had a scene which lasted nearly two hours. He was very angry, but I ought to confess that I began it. If he speaks of it tell him that I am not vexed, and he ought not to be angry with me either. We will make it up presently at dinner."

That set me at ease personally, and M. de Larcy continued his account of what had been said about me. He resumed—

"Some of the Ministers and myself asked M. Thiers to relate to us what he called your scene. He refused, saying, 'It would take too long. Falloux wanted to demonstrate to me that I did not know how to govern. I answered that in my place he would do exactly as I did. We are neither of us slow of speech. You can understand the result. Now let me set to work to govern with you or you will prove Falloux to have been right.' That," continued M. de Larcy, "was said gaily, and good-humouredly, but it did not satisfy my curiosity. Tell me the particulars of what passed."

I made no objection, and we went on to speak frankly about M. Thiers, whom he met daily and knew intimately.

"I do not think that he has deteriorated," said M. de Larcy, "but he has certainly changed. Either by the influence of these new relations, or by affecting a worthless popularity, his manners have become vulgar in inverse proportion to the height of his position, and

a strange contrast is often produced by it. There appears in him a shameless love of money, and he terrified us by his sharp way of pressing his claims when the question arose of rebuilding his house, which had been demolished in obedience to an edict of the Commune. The Committee of the Assembly proposed a million francs ; M. Thiers would not lower his demand for sixteen hundred thousand francs, which was a sum three or four times the value of his house. Then he enumerated his art treasures, which had all disappeared, but which he knew to be preserved and in a place of safety. It is said on good authority that one of the chief members of the Commune owed his immunity from punishment to their rescue, though it did violence to public opinion. But it is certain that Count Jaubert, president of the parliamentary committee, had great difficulty in negotiating with M. Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire, M. Thiers' Prime Minister, and that they compounded with difficulty for one million fifty-three thousand, at which the liberator of the territory showed an ill-humour really indecent, whereupon we took care to remind him that, at the Restoration, the Duc de Richelieu, though he was without fortune, only received a million, which he nobly gave to a hospital at Bordeaux. Another strange thing," added M. de Larcy, " Thiers has adopted a Voltairian tone which was not at all his formerly. He indulges now, even in Council, in irreligious jokes, and low talk such as I never heard from his lips during thirty years of frequent intercourse. It astonishes and grieves one to

see an old man behaving like a medical student. Even his gestures share in this decline."

Then M. de Larcy told me of a witty remark of Mademoiselle Jacquemart, who was living in M. Thiers' house, as she was painting his portrait. Going from the drawing-room to the dining-room followed by her host, she thought that she had to complain of gross unpoliteness, and turned angrily. "Accuse the Minister of War! Accuse the Minister of War!" said M. Thiers, pleased with his own wit, and Mademoiselle Jacquemart retorted, "Monsieur le President, you are not constitutional enough to have a responsible Minister."

Saddened by these details, though reassured with respect to myself, I went to dine at the Presidency. M. Thiers welcomed me without any allusion to the altercation of the day before. At dinner, I was seated between Madame Thiers and Mademoiselle Dosne.

"You will get on well with my sister-in-law," said M. Thiers to me, "she is very pious." This certificate of character was not perhaps given with perfect justice. I asked the two sisters if they were not vexed with me for having added a little to the fatigue of M. Thiers the day before. Madame Thiers answered without hesitation:

"It is good to accustom him to be contradicted; that is often necessary for him. Ah! you would render him a great service if you could convert him in the matter of Paris. He wishes to return thither by all means in spite of common sense."

I soon saw that this question had been brought forward against Mademoiselle Dosne, and that there was a division of opinion in the family as to the propriety of leaving the Government at Versailles, or bringing it back to Paris. Mademoiselle Dosne took part eagerly in the conversation, maintaining that to govern from Versailles was absurd and impossible besides. Madame Thiers replied in the same manner, "We should not be a fortnight in Paris before M. Thiers was assassinated!"

After that I had only to keep in the background between the sisters, to be present at a struggle in which I helped Madame Thiers as well as I could. She was simple, frank, and precise in her arguments, Mademoiselle Dosne was the better speaker, but a mind which was less fair, and she repeated the commonplaces of the papers of the extreme Left. From this argument, and the conversation throughout the dinner, I concluded that on the question of Paris, M. Thiers held the language of his sister-in-law and the ideas of his wife.

He thought himself bound to ask for Paris again, but he was far from being eager in this debate, and it was easy to believe that he would be delighted if he were refused what he appeared to desire. Besides, he took such precautions for his personal safety even at Versailles that some of his friends smiled maliciously.

A few days after I returned to Anjou, full of regrets and sad forebodings. I had seen vanish in a moment all the patriotic hopes which had been so nearly

realised. A future which we had believed to be ours now only appeared in the far distance, where it was difficult to perceive it. The wind was no longer favourable to the Monarchy, but blew the sails of the Republic. The Republic was M. Thiers, but for what length of time? What was M. Thiers himself? An old man whose faculties were becoming dimmed in the enjoyment of power, instead of gaining fresh strength in the stern contemplation of a great sacrifice and a great duty. In him moral decline went hand-in-hand with political decline. The man who was most capable of raising and guiding France, was to become the man who was the most stubborn in dividing her and setting her on a wrong course.

CHAPTER XVI.

A POLITICAL SOIRÉE AT VERSAILLES—A MORNING ENTERTAINMENT AT M. THIERS'—DEATH OF AUGUSTIN COCHIN—THE TWENTY-FOURTH OF MAY—A PARALLEL.

1871—1873.

The life of a recluse needs hope even more than life in society, because it has less variety, and when this nourishment fails resignation ought to become its chief pleasure and virtue. This was not difficult for me. Long ago what Madame de Sévigné recounts of the rupture between Madame de la Sablière and M. de la Fare had taken place between political life and myself. "Madame de la Sablière," she wrote to her daughter, "examined the poor excuses, the insincere reasons, the not knowing what more to say; finally when she had carefully examined the eclipse which darkened the landscape she made up her mind, and without any quarrel, without a reproach, without seeking notice, without turning him away, without explanation, without wishing to shame him, she slipped away herself, and without quitting her house to which

she returns sometimes, without saying that she would give up all, she enjoys being at the Hospital for Incurables so much that she lives there, so to speak." So it was with me. The incurables and the "not knowing what to say" had become my lot.

From afar I witnessed the sad fate of France with inexpressible sorrow. Scarcely had she strengthened her position below when everything gave way at the top. Nothing ever resembled more nearly the fable of Tantalus or the story of Penelope, than the undertaking of her unattainable salvation which was perpetually renewed and perpetually abortive.

The Academy remained the only direct link between the world and Bourg d'Iré, and from time to time I made it a duty, or at least a pretext for spending a few days in Paris. In the month of June we had found a successor to M. Villemain as secretary for life, now we were to elect a successor to him as member of the Academy, and the election was fixed for the 30th December, 1871. This balloting would be sure to cause a very exciting struggle. In one of his best speeches as life secretary M. Villemain had spoken from a lofty point of view and condemned the ideas and the style of M. Littré. But M. Littré was successor to M. Villemain, thanks to a scholarly and voluminous dictionary which is of sterling value.

As soon as the result of the election was announced I went to Versailles to spend two days with M. de Rességuier before returning to Anjou. My friends in the Assembly always gave me the most cordial wel-

come, and on this occasion I expected all the more enjoyment because I had no responsibility. I was not to escape so easily. I might have kept absolute silence on all the questions which were put to me, but this absolute silence would have appeared intensely disagreeable to those who did me the honour to ask my opinion. Besides, would my silence have been perfectly sincere?

I believe in the truth of the German proverb, "It is impossible to see the forest because of the trees." I think that with rare exceptions, the multiplicity of details, of parleyings, and of incidents which fill political life, necessarily end by confusing general ideas, and entangling or breaking the guiding clue. The contact of men outside political life with those who are within, and interviews frankly conducted between the actors on the stage and the spectators in the pit, may have their use. I knew that I was unequal to the burden of official work, but I did not think myself cut off from the free expression of ideas with my political friends. They did not refuse me the knowledge and information inherent to their position. Why should I have hidden from them the criticisms and doubts inherent to mine?

At the end of the year 1871 I found the exasperation against M. Thiers at its highest pitch; he had formerly done evil enough to our country, and he had now the power to do her all the good that he could have wished. Though he was able, better than anyone else, through his personal authority united to his

political authority, to add persuasion to force, and force to persuasion, on the contrary he instilled doubt and indecision in the minds of many, and inflicted on himself unpardonable disavowals.

Had he bound himself by any secret agreement during the Commune? Had we before our eyes a second edition *in petto* of Napoleon III. and the Italians? In what measure could any one give utterance to his alarm without being styled a fanatic, as he had styled me to M. de Larcy? Was it too soon? When would it be too late? Upon whom did it devolve to point out the time? The Orleans princes might have rendered this great service and played this great part. They did not appear disposed to take this step, and it is only fair to say that those who implored them to do so themselves caused them the gravest difficulties. The moderate Right were discouraged, and fell more and more under the yoke of the extreme Right.

Such was, briefly, the picture that I perceived at Versailles. And it was this view which inspired me in my interviews with my friends.

"The time is not far off," I said to them, "when you will infallibly be led to break off with M. Thiers, and it seems to me that you do not think enough of the morrow of that day, which will be full of difficulty. You do not sufficiently distinguish yourself from the Light Horse; you yield too much to the intimidation of the newspapers and cabals which obey imperious orders. You have not maintained your protest of July 7th on

the question of the flag with sufficient firmness, and the Republic profits by it to render you powerless. Finally you keep too much aloof from the Comte de Paris and the princes his uncles. The members of the Right who voted against the motion brought forward by M. Desjardins inviting the princes of Orleans to sit in the Assembly have committed a triple fault—they have deeply wounded the princes, freed M. Thiers from a great anxiety, and sealed his compact with the advanced Left."

Several of my friends answered, "We feel, we acknowledge these truths, but it is necessary to bell the cat, and you ought to do it."

I answered, "I am not qualified to do it," and retired to rest. But night brought counsel, and this is the counsel it brought me.

To have no claim, no political to-morrow, is a good condition for being heard without giving umbrage to any one. Not to have failed one's electors in the past, and not to dread them in the future, is an unassailable position, which permits one to say all without sparing anything. Of what good are self-sacrifice and disinterestedness if they are turned to the profit of a cowardly repose? Why, for instance, should M. de Larcy in the Gard, or M. de Kerdrel in the Morbihan, be compromised, when I could throw myself into the conflict without risk or danger? Why draw back at the prospect of a brief displeasure and idle reproaches, of which all the outlines are softened by distance? I rose on the morrow full of resolution, and went to

those who had spoken the day before, saying, "I shall say good-bye to you to-morrow, as I am going to spend New Year's Day with my family; but I am at your orders immediately. To-day we dine with M. de Meaux; he has a large drawing-room, invite any one you wish to meet there, and from this evening I am ready to submit to any examination you please."

They took me at my word, and MM. de Kerdrel, de Dampierre, and several other deputies went from bench to bench during the sitting of the Assembly, and invited them for that evening. At dinner we were only eight or ten. One of the guests, M. Ernoul, said to me—

"Why have you convened us for this evening?"

"I know nothing of it," I answered. "Only M. de Meaux and M. de Kerdrel know it."

It was the exact truth, for it was arranged that I should answer questions, whatever they might be, before the audience, whatever it might be. I may affirm that never was a game more openly played and with less preparation.

I had nothing to conceal, nothing to overcome; that was all the plot. Never was theatre got up in haste more devoid of prompters, rehearsals, and green-rooms. Immediately after dinner the drawing-room was filled by a hundred deputies, of whom some were unknown to me. It was necessary to observe a certain order in speaking, and with one accord the Marquis de Vogüé was chosen chairman. When the order of proceeding was settled, M. de Meaux, after addressing the meeting in a short preamble, turned to me and asked me to

state my opinion of the situation to our mutual friends. That was giving me great latitude, but I restrained myself, and touched only on two or three questions which appeared to me of the greatest importance. I adverted first to the private character of the meeting, and stated plainly that I was there by invitation.

The two burning questions at that time were the flag and the princes. I was speaking very frankly on these subjects when I was interrupted by a grey-haired man, old in looks, but young in his petulance of gesture and word. I asked who he was, and was told, "the Marquis de Franclieu." He has been only too well known since by the way in which he acted in the Senate in 1875, so I need not dwell on it. M. de la Rochette, M. de Carayon-Latour, and M. de Belcastel interrupted me one after the other, but without bitterness. My speech, for as I went on it had become a speech, was warmly approved by the majority, and towards midnight we separated on perfectly courteous terms.

The day after I set out at an early hour for Anjou, leaving behind me open questions and problems that had been propounded, and this is always the first stage to be got over in order to obtain a solution of them. But on the morrow also the *Union* denounced, misrepresented and anathematised all that had passed in the house of M. de Meaux. The moderate Right could very well have corrected these statements, but did not think that the moment had come for a collective act; its patience was not exhausted. Certainly I could have defended myself, but I had only spoken

to help my friends, not to increase their perplexity and embarrassment, so I confined myself to replying in a few words to a violent letter from the Marquis de Franclieu, whom I did not know, who had not inspired me with a wish to know him, and whom I have never seen since. M. de la Rochette, when he found that I had left Versailles the day after the meeting, wrote me a cordial letter. I answered him, and a correspondence was begun which lasted as long as it appeared to please him. I had long known him; he had been my colleague from 1848 to 1851. He was a man possessed of sterling qualities. He deserved a better end than that of filling the post of Senator, which he obtained from the Left after a compact worthy of blame in itself and odious when stipulated on his own behalf. Some saw in this an act in obedience to the orders of the Comte de Chambord, but it was certainly a fatal act as regards the country, and we have not ceased to suffer for it.

While this miserable compromise was being carried out by men who avowed themselves at every turn to be enemies of the most loyal, disinterested, and lawful transactions, I found myself—and on my own account I did not care—vilified with all the moderate Right, and with all the most eminent men of the Orleanist party. I knew myself to be in better company among the accused than among the accusers. It was only after a year had passed that renewed attacks induced me to state the truth publicly. I published my Versailles speech in the *Correspondant* and in the form of

a pamphlet. But as the faults of the extreme Right did not justify in my eyes those of M. Thiers, I published what I thought of political scepticism. This was certainly the mildest name that could be given to the conduct of the President of the Republic, taken as a whole, during the latter half of 1871 and the first half of 1872.

A short time after I went once more from Paris to Versailles, and resumed my intercourse with M. Thiers, who, in spite of my plain speaking, was very glad of it. He was naturally amiable and of a simplicity full of good humour. His ingenuous vanity had no anxiety about itself, and consequently no irritability. Neither he, nor Madame Thiers, nor Mademoiselle Dosne—to do them justice—changed their personal habits on getting into power. There was nothing strained, nothing pretentious in their behaviour. The two wives of M. Thiers—as he called them himself—continued to dress very simply, and their ways were rather parsimonious than luxurious. Mademoiselle Dosne was always ready to receive visitors. Madame Thiers often appeared fatigued, and went to sleep without scruple in the midst of the Presidential receptions. M. Thiers was as eager as ever to put questions or to lay down the law. His inquiring mind was still unwearied; he still took the same pains to get information from every one and to give in exchange the impression of his universality; and all this with great kindness—at least in appearance—and a charming good humour which I never saw any one resist.

I had an amusing instance of it on my first morning call. On my arrival at Versailles M. Thiers had said to me, "Let us resume our old habits. Come whenever you like at about one o'clock, that is the time when we shall have the best chance of talking without interruption." I was unlucky the first time I took advantage of this invitation. M. Thiers had the Budget Committee to breakfast, and they were still at table. The usher told him, and he begged me to wait a few minutes. Two persons whom I did not know were waiting in the room with me. In ten minutes M. Thiers came in. Taking my arm, he went straight to one of the persons who had been waiting, and said to him—

"My dear Dalloz, here is M. de Falloux, whom one can seldom get hold of. You are a Parisian, you will forgive me, and come back some other time without being angry with me."

Then turning to my other companion, M. Thiers said to him—

"I know what you have come to ask me, my dear Montholon. It is impossible. Let me tell you I know how the Sèvres porcelain is made better than you do. Your secret is not what you believe it to be, and it would ruin everything."

"But, M. le President——"

"There is no 'but,' my dear Montholon. Just listen."

And then for five minutes he explained the different processes of the Sèvres manufacture, explanations which I could not repeat, but which astonished me. His

explanations over, he gently showed M. de Montholon the door, and came back, saying to M. Dalloz—

"Poor Montholon is a needy man, who wishes to make me believe in his genius in the matter of china. He has got it into his head that I ought to make him superintendent of the Sèvres manufactory. He is no more suited for that post than I for——"

And M. Thiers stopped short.

"Ah! ah! Monsieur Thiers," I said, "you would be embarrassed to say what you could not do."

"That is true! that is true!" he said gaily, and he drew me into his study after having shaken hands with M. Dalloz.

That reminds me that he said one day about a man who had been raised to a high office, "He is no more fit for that post than I am to be a chemist, and I understand chemistry for the matter of that."

It is impossible to describe with what eagerness, once in his study, M. Thiers set himself to describe the situation as he wished me to accept it, to depict his difficulties, to bring forward all his efforts, illustrating what he said with rapidly sketched portraits. He was a passed master in that art.

"Since you would not share with me," he said to me, "the crushing burden of power, help me to convince several of your friends who are not reasonable. Take for instance the Duc de ———, who on the morrow of the Commune was convinced that he had sufficient popularity to pacify the city and its environs, and asked me to give him full powers for that, with

the title of Governor of Paris. Well, is it my fault if I have been obliged to refuse him? Is it my fault that I cannot content Montholon? Even in a different class of minds I find no more reasoning power or sense of proportion. I saw the Bishop of Poitiers lately. He is an intelligent man and a brilliant talker, and he has shown me the greatest kindness, while he is excessively modest with regard to himself. He only desires three things, as he has clearly given me to understand; to belong to the French Academy, to be Archbishop of Paris, and to have the Cardinal's hat. These three things do not depend solely on me, and I had to send him to others for them. Once more, is that my fault?"

As well as I could I defended the absent against his caustic remarks; I tried to show him that if I could not absolve my friends of everything, he could not, on his part, condemn everything; that there is an average of justice which every wise Government should acknowledge; that he, M. Thiers, had something better to do than to act a part, that he had a lofty mission to accomplish. We parted good friends; he appeared on this occasion to number me among reasonable people, and I promised myself to return to the charge, to press my arguments more closely, and to state very precisely my opinion as to the urgent necessity of a solution.

The best of arguments, the only one perhaps, would have been to put an end to the divisions of the Right, and so to the illusions of the Comte de

Chambord. Unfortunately nothing of the sort ensued, the eager spirits were more vehement and the moderates more timid than ever. The blindness of some and the feebleness of others gave full latitude to the President, and he took advantage of it to strengthen his position, which had been already fortified by the extension of power given him by the vote on the bill to which the name of the "Constitution Rivet" has been given. The more elbow-room M. Thiers had the more he inclined to the Left. A short time after having, when speaking in the Chamber, called M. Gambetta "fou furieux," he spoke of him as a true politician, and had many most compromising interviews either with him or his friends who held the most advanced views. The point of support of the Government had plainly passed from the Right to the Left, and on its way a good deal of ballast had been thrown into the sea. Following the example and at the instigation of the Government, universal suffrage inclined to the Left, and almost all the by-elections came to strengthen that side of the Assembly. The love of power in M. Thiers betrayed itself by all the usual symptoms, even to the most trifling. During a summer holiday at Trouville, whither he had gone for the benefit of the sea air, he amused himself with all kinds of military ceremonials, and on his return was received at Rouen with a salute of cannon and all the pomp of a royal reception.

The Right did not stint him either gratitude or respect; but even their tributes of respect had a limit,

and it was this limit more or less remote which irritated him. The Left held out very different prospects to him. The Republicans, feeling that the hour for ingratitude had not yet struck, not content with lavishing on him all kinds of flattery and compliments, refused him neither power nor time. They continually offered to prolong his power, and all the increase of authority that his ambition could wish for. They pretended to forget his age, and M. Thiers, without forgetting it, attached little importance to it. He liked to extol the Ministry of the Cardinal de Fleury, and repeated more than once, "It was a man of ninety-two who did that, and this encourages me. My age ought perhaps to forbid my making plans that would require much time to carry out, but my health allows me to do so, and my powers have not hitherto failed me." He was infinitely clever in averting a parliamentary crisis, and he knew how to make up for concessions in fact or principle accorded to the Left by Conservative phrases, and could pull up just as the patience of others was about to give way.

In the month of March, 1872, I was visited by a heavy sorrow on learning at Bourg-d'Iré the news of Augustin Cochin's death. All the men who, like myself, had been connected with him in 1849 in the Committee of Public Education, and who had since then been associated with him in his struggles against the Empire, had always felt for him the highest esteem and the most faithful friendship. And he had increased those feelings in us by his noble conduct during the

siege of Paris. At the end of the war he had felt the misfortunes of France very deeply, but he was firmer than ever in his patriotism and devotedness. At first M. Thiers had thought of making him prefect of the Seine. But evil influences were against this good and natural intention. Though neither his rare merits nor his popular talents, nor even a certain leaning towards republicanism, were denied, still he was accused of being too clerical to suit the people of Paris. This was really to misunderstand the population of Paris! What they knew of M. Cochin was above all his love for Paris, his impartiality, his justice, his self abnegation in every case, and his inexhaustible charity; they had loved and respected his name for many years.

M. Thiers knew all that, but he durst no longer act according to his own opinion, and alleged to himself an ingenious pretext for his want of courage by saying that as the residence of the Government was at Versailles he wanted him to be prefect there in order to keep him near himself. That post did in fact acquire an accidental importance, but still it was inferior to the prefecture of the Seine, and very soon became an office of secondary rank.

Augustin Cochin would have magnified any office; he at once did so at Versailles by his personal influence. In a few days his reception rooms were more frequented than those of the Ministers, and became the rendezvous of politicians. The men who represented opinions which were both Conservative and Liberal found themselves at home there. Besides

entertainments, where the new prefect was too much sought after not to derive enjoyment from them, the work of the prefecture was seriously or rather heartily entered into.

The prefect of Versailles, aided by Madame Cochin, was incessantly and indefatigably employed in caring for the men and women who were prisoners, after the Commune, in the Orangery and some of the barracks of Versailles, in trying to restore them to habits of work and morality, and in repairing ruins from one end to the other of the department devastated by the Prussians, and in many places destroyed by the shells of the foreign artillery and that of the Parisian insurrection. He felt new suffering at the contact of each wound, at the sight of each ruin.

The zeal of M. Cochin never failed for a single day, but his strength gave way. He loved life, for with him it was one long course of doing good. For the same reason he did not fear death; so he faced it without anxiety. His faith, his family, his country, were the objects of courageous and constant solicitude with him to the last. Having summoned to his bedside a Jesuit father, Père Noury, who showed himself thoroughly worthy of his confidence; having taken a tender farewell of his admirable wife, his beloved children, and a faithful servant; having received the holy communion from the hands of the Bishop of Orleans, he devoted his last thought to his country and wrote to M. Thiers:

"Dear President and Friend,

"I should be in the wrong if I did not set before you the

whole truth as the approach of death has revealed it to me. You can take it from me, as you know that I have never devoted myself to any party whether Republican or Monarchist, only to Jesus Christ, whom your powerful mind will end by acknowledging as the true God, descended upon earth by Divine decree to sow here an everlasting germ of intellectual order and moral regeneration.

"This is the everlasting truth, but here is the truth such as I see it at the present moment.

"You are still strong enough, powerful enough, looked up to in the country and in Europe to be able to dispose of the fate of France, your mother, and to launch this noble ship into a Republican or Monarchist current for many years by a simple turn of your hand. If you do it, you will have a high place with God, who has chosen you as his instrument, and in history, which has never before seen a hero who, without a sword, could change the whole course of events simply by his own royal spirit.

"But it is necessary to make haste and not deceive yourself, for time presses, if you wish to avoid the shame of a return to the Empire or a violent temptation to the cupidity of our neighbours.

"It would be more manly to found the Republic because its name quiets the passions of the multitude, and we can present a braver front to Europe under that name than that of the Monarchy. But you cannot raise the dead to life. The Republic has been killed by her own children, the odious 1793, the foolish 1848. 1870 has carried her to the grave. She was killed by Robespierre and Marat, then by all the word-mongers, who have dealt in plots, in debts, and foolish actions, who have three times ascended this chariot of the people."

This letter was never finished, and was only sent to M. Thiers after M. Cochin's death. He was touched by it, went to the funeral of his young friend, and spared nothing that could show his regard. But this appeal from the dead did not set him free from his promises or his passions, any more than an appeal in the name of his country had done.

In the Assembly the feeling grew stronger daily that it would soon be necessary to arrest M. Thiers in his fatal career, or overthrow him. Many months passed in this miserable dilemma, till the day when during a noisy sitting M. Thiers confessed that during the Commune he had negotiated and treated with the most advanced members of the most violent and criminal faction. This declaration was received in a freezing and terrified silence. Those who had denied the fact and those who had had a presentiment of it were equally stupefied. By a sudden and silent agreement it was decided not to draw the logical conclusion of such a confession, so much was it feared that it would reveal a situation shameful for the country and shocking to the Assembly. Nevertheless the blow was struck and nothing henceforth could avert the consequences. A new incident was about to put an end to these last hesitations.

It 1871 M. Jules Ferry had left the Foreign Office after the Laluyé case, a trial which, without judging him too harshly, ought to have condemned him to absolute retirement. M. de Rémusat was asked to succeed him. It was the spirit of a coterie succeeding to that of a faction. This choice caused much recrimination. M. de Rémusat did not belong to the Assembly, he had never been one of the diplomatic body, and he was too old to learn; thus this unexpected appointment violated the proprieties sadly. But for all that diplomacy had not had much to do immediately after our defeats. The liberation of our

territory did not owe much to diplomacy, it was rather the work of our financial regeneration, and M. Thiers, who claimed the glory, kept the monopoly to himself. So it was with a feeling of resignation that M. de Rémusat was received as Foreign Secretary. Many even of his old friends had seen him take his place on the Ministerial Bench with pleasure, and the newcomers had found in him a kindness and easy courtesy which it was impossible to deny him.

Matters were in this state when, as there was a vacancy in the representation of Paris, M. de Rémusat presented himself as Conservative candidate in the month of April, 1873. He was strongly upheld by the Government, and fortunately the extreme Left set up in opposition to him an intensely radical candidate. It chose M. Barodet, a teacher from Lyons, who had a short time before been expelled from the mayoralty of Lyons, and who certainly had not taken that step without being urged to do so. The question was thus between M. de Rémusat, long known as a Liberal, a minister of M. Thiers, and M. Barodet, absolutely unknown in Paris, and with no other claim than that of being adopted by the mob. If M. Thiers still kept some hold on the Republican party, if the Republican party still had some gratitude to M. Thiers it would soon be shown by Paris. The answer was startling. M. Barodet polled 45,000 votes more than M. de Rémusat.

The forbearance of the Conservative party was nearly at an end. But into what hands, and those firm

enough, were they to trust the succession to M. Thiers? Many thought of General Changarnier. When he chose he could be eloquent and politic; he was also a man of action, but knew how to control himself and to wait. He was the general who had the most chance in 1848, and had much more in 1871. His Orleanist leanings raised some objections, more narrow than political, and in order not to divide their strength the Conservatives fixed on Marshal MacMahon, thus doing homage to a great military reputation, the victory over the Commune, perfect loyalty, and noble self-sacrifice.

The method of attack was this. Three hundred and twenty members of the Assembly signed a question on the political situation, and M. de Broglie was requested to speak in their name. He did so with great moderation, wisdom, and lucidity in expostulation. The *Journal Officiel* states that renewed applause greeted the orator till he took his seat.

M. Dufaure, Home Secretary, answered him with ill-concealed bitterness, and without the liveliness which he generally showed. But it was not the Ministry that people wished to hear, it was the President of the Republic himself. M. Thiers, who was quite as anxious to be heard, claimed the right to defend himself in person. The Provisional Constitution, which was named after M. Rivet, examined this right so minutely in order to prevent the head of the executive power from exercising too direct or too prolonged a pressure on the Assembly. M. Thiers had, when a member of the committee, struggled

against complicated arrangements, which he called "Chinese ornaments," or nonsense; but they were very influential and had to be obeyed. M. Thiers, even while fulfilling the necessary formalities, did not conceal the disgust which he had always had, and wrote to M. Buffet, President of the Assembly, "I must beg of you to inform the Assembly that I intend to take a share in the debate, as I have a right to do by law, and which reason would confer on me if the law did not exist." (Laughter on the Left and great commotion.) Immediately after the reading of this letter a lively skirmish began as to the day and hour when M. Thiers should be heard. The Right wished the debate as soon as possible. The Left wanted it put off, hoping to make the debate last over till Monday, which would have given them time to agree and perhaps to rouse Paris, which is easy to excite on Sunday. The majority decided that not only should M. Thiers be heard on the morrow, May 24th, but that there should be a special sitting to hear him at nine in the morning. Nothing could indicate more plainly their wish to conclude such a debate during the day, even if we were to have an evening sitting.

M. Thiers was punctual to this early appointment. Never did he, who had so many resources, show himself more clever or ingenious when defending himself as to details; while he returned his adversaries blow for blow one might have thought it possible for him to win back his "prestige," but when it came to answering the chief objections he could neither hide

nor deny the weakness of his position. His principal argument was this: "You attack me in the name of three monarchies, and you have only one throne to offer them. You complain of M. Barodet's election in Paris and that of M. Ranc at Lyons; I should readily complain of them also, but it is you who are responsible, because you have been so long in deciding on a form of government. If the Republic were the decided and constitutional form of government, the difficulties, exaggerations, and worries would cease, quietness would return. It is not our politics, but yours, which compromise public safety."

After this speech of the President, the Constitution required that the sitting should be prorogued, and that afterwards the discussion should be resumed without the President's joining in it, or even being present at it. Then a very violent debate began, with closed doors, between M. Thiers and M. Buffet. M. Thiers wished to be present at the private sitting, in his own box. M. Buffet explained to him that his presence, under whatever pretext, was formally forbidden by the law.

"And if I go into the President's box," said M. Thiers, angrily, "what could you do?"

"I should at once cause that and all the others to be cleared," replied M. Buffet with his well-known firmness, which, aided by the cleverness of M. de Broglie, decided the day.

M. Thiers went away after that, and the sitting was resumed at two o'clock—the sitting but not the discus-

sion. Every one's mind was made up, and it was not thought fit to prolong the disputes of the tribune. As for the greater number of consciences the verdict which was to be pronounced ran thus: "M. Thiers draws his premises from indisputable difficulties of which he is the principal author. He speaks of three dynasties, and there would be only two if he, the principal man in whom the country has confidence, had firmly desired it. Between these two dynasties, that of the Bourbons and that of the Bonapartes, the choice of the country immediately after our terrible disasters would not have been doubtful if M. Thiers, by selfish artifices, had not allowed hopes of a Napoleonic restoration to spring up. The statement that the possession of the Republic would suffice for the Republicans has still less foundation. The man who spoke thus in 1873 forgot that in 1848 and 1849, in full enjoyment of a Republic which had no rival, he had struggled more than any one against democratic violence, and had condemned it with memorable reproofs, dark forebodings."

M. Thiers was not contradicted aloud, because the refutation would have been too direct and too personal. Now he only represented a change of conviction, unfortunately caused by a change of position. He was defended by M. Casimir Périer, Minister of the Interior, who had also paid for his elevation to power by recanting his former opinions. At that time such an advocate could not convince such judges, for he was precisely one of their causes of complaint. After some words spoken with difficulty M. Casimir Périer de-

cided to read some remarks which he had written out beforehand, but in this he was not more successful. He was not answered on the Right, he was not supported on the Left, and the end of the debate was pronounced. An order of the day, signed by some of the principal members of the Right, was carried to the Speaker's seat by M. Ernoul, who read it without comment in the midst of angry murmurs from the Left. The two parties facing each other felt that it was no longer the time for discussion but for counting their forces. The order of the day demanded by M. Ernoul was couched in these terms:—

"The National Assembly,

"Considering that the form of Government is not under discussion,

"That the Assembly has before it the constitutional laws which have been proposed as a result of its decisions and which it is bound to examine,

"But that from henceforth it is most important to reassure the country by carrying out in the Government a policy which is truly Conservative,

"Regrets that certain ministerial changes which have recently taken place have not satisfied Conservative interests as might have been expected,

"And passes to standing orders."

The Left asked simply to proceed to public business. By rotation their bill was sure of priority. It was thrown out by 362 votes to 348. The order of the day which had been moved was adopted by 360 votes to 344. The resignation of the President was imminent from that moment. The Left, wishing to avert it, asked that the sitting should be closed and prorogued till Monday. The Right, not wishing the

agitation to spread to Paris, voted for an evening sitting and carried their motion. The discussion was continued the same evening at nine o'clock.

At the beginning of the second sitting M. Dufaure handed to the speaker of the Assembly a message which conveyed the resignation of M. Thiers. It was accepted, and the majority decided to proceed immediately to choose a new President of the Republic. The minority protested, begged again for an adjournment, and protested, but in vain. The majority was not to be shaken.

At about eleven in the evening M. Buffet announced the result of the balloting, in which the Left had refused to join. The votes which had been taken numbered 391, a figure rather more than was required by rule. Marshal MacMahon had obtained 390 votes, one was given to M. Grévy.

M. Buffet at the head of a deputation of the Committee left the chair to carry this vote to the Marshal, who resided just then in Versailles because of his military command. At a quarter to twelve M. Buffet reappeared in the speaker's desk, announcing in these terms the success of his mission :—

"Gentlemen, according to the orders of the Assembly, a deputation from the Committee of which I have the honour of forming a part went to Marshal MacMahon and informed him of the decision of the Assembly.

"I ought to say that in order to conquer the resistance, the objections, and the scruples of the illustrious Marshal, we have been obliged to make an earnest appeal to his devotedness and spirit of sacrifice for his country of which the Marshal has already given so many proofs, and of which he gives a still more striking proof in accepting the lofty but difficult functions with which the Assembly entrusts him."

The sitting closed at ten minutes before midnight with cries of "Long live France!" from the Right, a single voice on the other side shouting, "Long live the Republic!"

The natural obstinacy displayed by the Left, who defended themselves inch by inch during an entire sitting which lasted almost without a break from nine in the morning till midnight, had as its aim to give M. Thiers time for reflection and to prevent his resignation; his attitude makes it probable that he would willingly have reconsidered his first movement of irritation. Once already, some months before, he had promptly yielded to the entreaties of a part of the Assembly. On the 24th of May, at the hour when M. Buffet and the members of the Committee went on their mission, Marshal MacMahon was absent, and had been in conference with M. Thiers for two hours. These two hours had been employed by the latter in pointing out in every light the difficulties and dangers of the situation. "You see, my dear Marshal," said M. Thiers, "an old politician like myself, trained to parliamentary struggles, can hardly get out of it without great difficulty. Your political inexperience will succumb at the first steps. You do not know, you cannot know, the unreasonableness of parties. To-day office is a wasps' nest, in which a military nature like yours would lose patience in forty-eight hours."

This language was certainly not devoid of truth, but was it M. Thiers' business to point out so care-

fully at that time that his succession could not be accepted by any one? He had so worked on the mind of his auditor that M. Buffet spoke nothing but the truth when he informed the Assembly that it had been necessary to display great energy in order to overcome a resistance which appeared at first insurmountable. "M. Thiers has convinced me that I am incapable of bearing such a burden," repeated the Marshal in accents of sincere conviction and without the shadow of a malicious insinuation. To the reiterated entreaties of the Committee the Marshal replied, "If the Assembly and M. Thiers cannot be reconciled let some other person than myself be chosen. Why do they not nominate you, M. Buffet?" When M. Buffet energetically repelled this suggestion, the Marshal turned to one of the vice-presidents, "You, M. Benoist d'Azy, enjoy, like M. Buffet, the esteem of all, you are far more fit than I; accept, accept, I beg of you!" Finally it was necessary to point out emphatically to him that there was no other issue to the situation, that there was no alternative between himself and real anarchy, and the consent of the Marshal was literally torn from him rather than obtained.

It gives me pleasure also to say how noble and disinterested General Changarnier showed himself upon that occasion. When the majority was clearly made manifest by a first ballot, its principal leaders retired to one of the committee rooms to fix on the name of the man whom they should propose to succeed M.

Thiers. Till then there had only been a few confidential interviews, and all arguments had been carefully avoided which would have been caused by the bringing forward of any particular name. On entering the committee room General Changarnier did not conceal that he considered himself elected. When his sagacity had convinced him of his error, when M. Raoul Duval had nominated Marshal MacMahon, General Changarnier, who presided over the meeting, appeared troubled for a moment, but passing his hand quickly over his forehead, he said in a firm voice, "Gentlemen, if you think that Marshal MacMahon is the one best suited for the post, I wish to be the first to propose and proclaim him President!" And it was not a mere temporary impulse; he never failed him for a single day, and in every difficulty Marshal MacMahon has found the old general full of devotedness and wise counsel.

Many expressed the desire that Changarnier should die a Marsnal of France; this wish was not carried out. The General never complained of it. He ended his political career like his military career, with a faithfulness to duty and a greatness of self-abnegation which raised him to the level of the highest dignities. Perhaps justice, certainly fortune, had behaved badly to him. He at least had never wronged his country.

Can as much be said for the persevering founder of our third Republic?

The great political career of M. Thiers was ended on the 24th of May. After that he lived much more

for his resentment than his glory; old age, which lends authority to great talents, only seemed to be left to M. Thiers to prove his accusers in the right.

He was for forty years the rival of M. Guizot, in entirely different ways, and it is impossible when one has survived them both not to compare them in spite of one's self. Neither of them was, according to my idea, a statesman in the old and lofty sense of the word.

This title has only been given by posterity to those who, casting a daring glance over their country and their age, have conceived some great design, and by courage still more than good fortune have succeeded in carrying it out.

Sully was certainly of this number. Born in the most troublous times, he understood, and in concert with Henri IV. he succeeded in carrying out, great ideas of national pacification within the country and great views of aggrandisement abroad, and it is not easy to find out what belongs to the master or the servant. In fifteen years he raised an edifice which only needed to crown it the two or three years snatched from the good fortune of France by the knife of Ravaillac.

Richelieu took up and carried on the same task in a harder manner, with a more bitter character, but with the same loftiness of judgment and the same final success.

Louis XIV. did not allow sufficiently for the independence of others to give scope to any original

genius, but he knew how to discern and make use of clever instruments, and history has done homage to the tools of a great reign and a great king.

We must pass over the reign of Louis XV. to find another great figure. The fortunate choice which Louis XVI. made of Turgot would, perhaps, have given France one of her greatest statesmen if he had had time allowed him. How many chimeras Turgot mixed with realities will never be known to a certainty, for neither were tested in the crucible of experience. But I think I may say that Turgot saw clearly and wished earnestly to carry out some of the reforms which alone could have averted the French Revolution. This insight and this patriotism were in 1776 the true mark of genius.

Mirabeau, but for his vices, could have taken up and continued the mission of Turgot. But he was far inferior in two things: he had less original genius, perhaps because he appeared at a time when many wise men had the same presentiment; he had less magnanimity, for he was almost always considering how he could retaliate on society which had cast him out and branded him.

We must turn aside a little from these great memories to be just towards M. Guizot and M. Thiers, who, however, have deserved to be remembered in history. M. Guizot was more of an orator in the classic acceptation of the term, but M. Thiers gave new life to political eloquence, and he introduced into the tribune the ingenious turns, the thousand and one facets, the

familiar phrases of what is called conversation. The thoughts and views of M. Guizot had more width and loftiness, but they were often majestically barren. M. Thiers had more fire, more variety, but his versatility did not let him think much nor persevere long.

Both were apologists thoroughly convinced of what they advocated, they both were full of an idea which had arrived at its full maturity—the accession of the middle class to all ranks of the social hierarchy. They were neither of them outright innovators nor imitators, but they were very practical and very distinguished men, carrying out the current opinions of their country and their time according to the methods which seemed most expedient to them.

M. Guizot sought above all to enlighten public opinion, M. Thiers to push it forward. M. Guizot did not understand when to yield, M. Thiers did not understand in time the danger of certain exactions.

No Minister, since the introduction of parliamentary government in France, had ever been at the head of a more compact and obedient majority than that of M. Guizot; no one profited less by it. M. de Villèle had the same privilege for seven years under more doubtful conditions; but M. de Villèle left behind him three great works: a great social reparation, the indemnity of the emigrant nobility; the conversion of stocks—a great monarchist victory; the deliverance of the King of Spain. It would be impossible to find a similar achievement in the seven years' rule of M. Guizot.

M. Thiers, who differed greatly from his rival both by nature and education, also differed from him of a set purpose. He often set his own imprudence or his own blindness in opposition to precepts or practice which did not belong to routine. He perceived no more than did the men in power the dangers and mistakes of an opposition of which, however, he was a part, and he came full tilt, crushing himself against the Revolution of February, having no more foreseen or divined it than the men whom it struck and overthrew.

From a private point of view M. Guizot gained immensely over M. Thiers. M. Guizot gave to his retreat every sign of greatness. He continued poor, simple, and dignified, without anger against events, without bitterness against his country, without moroseness in the bosom of his family, of which he was at once the idol, the oracle, and the delight.

M. Thiers was the head of a household which contained neither the conditions nor the sentiments essential to a family; it was a house without children, and yet the want of them was not felt. It was impossible to think of M. Thiers in another existence than that of the orator's bench, wearing himself out in work or never-ending interviews. He often knew what it was to fall from power, but never to have finally resigned it. He willingly forgave his enemies, but never his successors. The last of them, Marshal MacMahon, he never forgave.

To that fault, which was grave enough, he added

another which was really wicked, that of drawing France and her cause into angry feelings and vengeance, of which he could not measure the consequences.

M. Guizot died at an advanced age, surrounded by his family and life-long friends, worthy of the most respectful gratitude from the party which he had never deserted. M. Thiers died at nearly the same age, but he was snatched away in the midst of bitter thoughts and plans which resembled plots, abandoned by old friends who despaired of his return, and given up to secret enemies, or at least to very new friends, who deceived him till his death.

CHAPTER XVII.

MINISTRY OF THE DUC DE BROGLIE—MONARCHICAL NEGOTIATIONS—MANIFESTO OF SALZBOURG—CONCLUSION.

1873.

On the 26th of May the *Journal Officiel* announced the composition of the new Ministry. Marshal MacMahon gave the leadership to the Duc de Broglie, who was called to it by his talents and success in politics, and appointed him at the same time Foreign Minister instead of M. de Rémusat.

M. Beulé, better known at the Academy of the Fine Arts than in Parliament, but whom the Assembly had received very sympathetically, as he deserved, was Minister of the Interior, succeeding M. Casimir Périer.

M. Ernoul replaced M. Dufaure as Minister of Justice. He had gained renown in the House by a very brilliant speech on decentralisation.

M. Léon Say was succeeded by M. Magne as Finance Minister. The latter had not less experience in a parliamentary debate than in handling the public funds.

Admiral Dompierre d'Hornoy replaced Admiral Pothuau in the Admiralty.

M. Batbie became Minister of Public Instruction, Public Worship and the Fine Arts, thus uniting the portfolios which had been divided between M. de Fourtou and M. Waddington.

M. Desseilligny succeeded M. Berenger as Minister of Works.

M. de la Bouillerie replaced M. Teisserenc de Bort in Agriculture and Commerce.

General Cissey was retained *ad interim* at the Ministry of War.

The composition of the Cabinet represented the moderate sentiments of Marshal MacMahon, the combination which could best satisfy the different fractions of the Assembly, and the hopes for the future entertained by the Conservative party which did not believe in the stability of order without a return to Monarchy. The hour which the Orleans princes had waited for had struck, and many a look was turned towards them. On their part they ceased to a resistance which had not yet been completely overcome, and without giving his departure as much publicity as in the negotiations of July, 1871, the Comte de Paris set out for Germany in the summer of 1873, stayed some days in Vienna, and on the 5th of August went to Frohsdorf.

At this news, which was not expected by a certain number of Orleanists, great surprise was felt. Some complained bitterly that the Comte de Paris had

delivered them up without conditions, and that the whole monarchical future of France was at the mercy of the Comte de Chambord.

"One uses more ceremony in buying or selling a horse," observed M. Jules de Lasteyrie. Others who were calmer or less attached than M. Jules de Lasteyrie to the inheritance of Lafayette answered him that the best way to overcome the prejudices which belonged to the Count de Chambord was to touch his heart; that the house of Bourbon without its head would never have the moral authority which the future of France so sadly needed, and that, instead of being astonished or vexed at the self-sacrifice of the princes, their followers ought to admire and rejoice at it.

Living, as I had done for so long, at a distance from the scenes of active political life, I could hardly ask for confidential communications, which might have been tampered with in the post; and while rejoicing at so thorough and spontaneous a reconciliation, I believed nevertheless that there was more complacency than strict truth in this pretended absence of all previous consultations. As I had closely watched for twenty years the invincible obstinacy of the private advisers of M. le Comte de Chambord, I was not sorry to think that some explanations had been offered or asked before this solemn interview. Therefore I hailed with joy this new monarchist dawn; and at the agricultural meeting at Segré, where I was once more asked to speak in the month of September, I resolved again to profit by the holidays of the Assembly to send to my friends

who were dispersed the expression of my approbation and my desires.

Starting with the agricultural interest, as was proper, I said—

"Last year I tried to put you on your guard against a maxim which was then in fashion, and which consisted in the pretension that a nation could be organised without giving it a constitution. The event has proved that I did not mislead you; little by little truth has conquered sophism, and now all are of one mind in demanding a definite Government. In effect, a provisional prosperity, a provisional security, are words which contradict each other and exclude each other. If prosperity and safety are real they are not provisional, and if they are provisional, depend on it they are not real. Would you be content with a provisional family or even a provisional farm?

"When you enter upon a lease do you not try to make it as long as possible, and do you not say that without that indispensable condition you could not feel easy in improving, undertaking, or building. It is the same with a wise and wholesome policy, and general interests must not be treated with less precaution and foresight than private ones.

"Now that she has been restored to her dignity by the liberation of her territory, restored to the calm and firm possession of herself by the help of God, and the effort in common of all honest men, France desires, without ingratitude, without forgetfulness, to remain just towards the past, but above all to occupy herself with the future.

"But if all are agreed in demanding a settled Government they are not agreed in the same degree as to what form of Government would be best.

"This most important deliberation will henceforth be the first object of the eminently loyal and patriotic Assembly which has already so powerfully contributed to repair our losses.

"Let us hope that in the end it will give us the stability which is the best guarantee of liberty, that this Government will be neither a surprise nor a lucky hit, but the work deeply pondered over, and consequently lasting, of a great national reconciliation. Only a few months ago we seemed to be far from this consummation; but the Assembly, terrified by the guilty and

startled by plotters, gave a vigorous impulse to the helm and changed the course of the ship.

"The pilot to-day is a man who rules much more by the respect he inspires than by the force at his orders, and who has a character loftier than the office he fills, though that is the first in the state.

"Though he was popular on account of his military valour, he has gained fresh popularity by a still rarer spell, that of disinterestedness.

"Marshal MacMahon, who remains truly modest at the summit of power and fame, knows that at a time of sad reverses like ours, selfishness and egotism are treason to patriotism, and may, without letting their tendency be perceived, lead to real crimes. Renewing the old epithet of Bayard, he shows us that if the race of knights without fear are still numerous in France, the race of knights without reproach, more difficult to preserve, is not, moreover, extinct."

These ideas expressed so clearly the current of public opinion that they were published in the Conservative papers, and even in the *Journal Officiel*, and were rather discussed than opposed in the journals of the Left. Every one felt that the situation could not be prolonged. Many of those who still fought for the Republican cause seemed to do so rather from party spirit than from conviction, and it was not rare to meet Republicans who said, "We cannot vote for the Monarchy, but we should see it return without dissatisfaction if it can give France the rest that we cannot yet promise her." We had even seen the Parisian population seized with a sort of monarchical infatuation at the beginning of June, on the Shah's arrival, and if it would be childish to found any argument upon the eagerness with which they received this sovereign, it was at least a symptom which was not to be despised.

Just then I received a letter from the Duc de Broglie, who was taking a few days' rest in the country. In its simplicity and intimacy of expression this letter bears, in opposition to the calumnies which have been lavished on its writer, undeniable testimony to the prime thoughts and true sentiments of my noble friend with regard to the monarchical restoration. He wrote to me on the 24th of August, 1873—

"Well! yes, we have cleared the way, and there remains scarcely an obstacle to what you have wished for all your life. But it is not everything to have the way clear, it is necessary to walk in it. A nation cannot go to meet a man however lofty his birth. He must come at least half-way. Will he do so? Will he even take one step? Nothing authorises me to suppose so.

"I want to speak to you about these things and to consult you. As Versailles is on the line to Angers, could you not arrange to meet me somewhere half-way. But it would be kinder to come and spend a morning at Versailles during my September solitude.

"I shall willingly send you the letters of the friend whom I mourn more and more every day. Oh! what a strange destiny has robbed us of this valuable helper! I cannot think without despair of what it would have been to have him with me just now."

These last lines, relating to Augustin Cochin, will show those who do not know the Duc de Broglie how undeserved is the reproach which has been cast on him of being unfriendly and despising advice.

I answered his invitation by offering to come not half-way, but to Versailles itself, the importance of the subject not admitting of half confidences and half sacrifices. The papers had at the same time brought

me rumours which represented the Duc de Broglie, at the Council General of the Eure, as busied with two designs at once, one monarchical, the other different and more mysterious. I did not conceal my astonishment, or rather incredulity, on this point. He answered me at once—

"Your letter which I find here increases my desire to see you. I do not know what news has been given to you about me, nor what report of my words. There is no discrepancy between my language in public and in private, and I am engaged in no underhand work. But it is useless to write since you hold out hopes that we may be able to converse. Soon to meet then, the sooner the better."

I arrived at Versailles during the vacation of the Assembly. The whole Ministry was settled there. Nothing could be quieter than that magnificent residence, to which solitude and sadness seemed more suited than parliamentary tumult. The Duc de Broglie rented a house in the Rue des Réservoirs, and I lodged opposite. Nothing prevented us from leading a sort of country-house life, and we could not have seen more of each other if we had been under the same roof. Here is the substance of our conversations. My first care was to ask a man who was so well informed and of such loyal sincerity what was the real state of things, that is the one which the newspapers only tell imperfectly or incorrectly. My interrogation began during my visit on the 5th of August, for I was convinced that the Comte de Paris, without imposing hard conditions, would not have gone to Frohsdorf without the certain knowledge how he would be received.

"You are mistaken as to that," said the Duc de Broglie. "The princes having a long time hesitated and deliberated among themselves, have gone to ask for a reconciliation without restrictions or conditions. They have been told many a time that this was the only way to touch the heart of the Comte de Chambord, but that this satisfaction having been given, the Prince in his turn would yield without reserve. It has not turned out exactly as was predicted. The Comte de Chambord has shown great family affection, he has kindly and warmly spoken to his two cousins of their wives, their children, their travels, their battles, but he has always insisted that political decisions were his right, and could only be taken when France on her side had recognised and recalled the Monarchy. The Comte de Paris, who was careful not to mar a visit which afforded him real enjoyment, and who besides wished to bring back only kind words to his uncles and friends, did not persist. However, from some words dropped by the Comte de Chambord, and some more plainly spoken by his advisers, the Comte de Paris returned with an impression which harmonised with our hopes that the Comte de Chambord, though persisting in an exaggerated sense of honour, at heart regretted his Chambord manifesto; and if he will not give way in advance, in order not to buy the throne at the price of a recantation, yet he will not oppose the wishes of France regularly expressed."

"But," I said to my friend, "you are moving in a vicious circle. The Prince thinks that he cannot yield

with dignity until he has been recalled to France, but he will not be recalled unless he yields, or at least gives in some form or other the guarantee that he will not, on the morrow of his return, enter into conflict with the whole nation. How did you get out of that?"

"We are not yet out of it, but we are trying to get out. We think it a great thing that the Comte de Chambord now only argues on a question of form, for henceforth he cannot show himself invincible with regard to a simple formality, as at first he appeared inclined to do with regard to a principle. It was already too much to have wrecked everything on the single question of the flag, but to let it be understood that it is no longer a point of honour, and to reduce it to a simple question of procedure that is not tenable and cannot long be sustained. We have not, therefore, lost courage. Two members of the Right, as moderate as they are intelligent, M. Sugny and M. Merveilleux du Vignaux, have started for Frohsdorf on an official mission. They have explained all the motives which lead them to solicit a more explicit answer, and have been constantly listened to with favour, and encouraged. The negotiation is not broken off, and we do not despair of final success. However, the Marshal, who is disinterestedness itself, and who on this subject is more than disinterested, for he and his friends are longing to have their names attached to a monarchist restoration, the Marshal, head of the army and responsible for the public tranquillity, cannot for any length

of time accept evasive answers and an equivocal position. So we sent another member of the Assembly, M. Combier, who approaches nearer to the extreme Right than M. de Sugny and M. Merveilleux du Vignaux. He is a former pupil of the Polytechnic School, and very firm in his ideas. We are expecting his return from one moment to another, and if he brings a favourable answer we shall begin to act. This is why I was so impatient to see you, for I want to be counselled and guided in a path which you know is perfectly new to me."

Certainly, if I had ever doubted the intentions of M. de Broglie in such a matter, nothing could have better convinced me of his perfect sincerity than this language and these sentiments. To him I was from the first day of our friendship the type of the most faithful and devoted Legitimist, and he would certainly never have sought to draw me from my retreat if he had in the depths of his heart any shadow of hesitation or mental reserve.

Though owing to the peculiar position of some of the members of the Cabinet the monarchical restoration had not been discussed in the Council, the Duc de Broglie was none the less in perfect agreement with the greater number of his colleagues, with M. Beulé among others, and he in his capacity as Minister of the Interior was called to play an active and prominent part in the arrangements to be carried out in view of such a contingency.

I wished therefore to talk it over frankly with him.

He was a great admirer of the Duc de Broglie, was devoted to him, and left the diplomatic part of the question entirely to him; but in everything touching the Ministry of the Interior he seemed to me to neglect not the slightest detail, worked most zealously and with his whole heart.

He said to me one morning, "I have just had, to my entire satisfaction, unexceptionable proof that the Count de Chambord has sacrificed his manifesto of July 5th, 1871, *in petto*. It is this—he is hastening the preparations for his entry into Paris. I learnt from a police report just now that Count Maxence de Damas, who is in charge of the carriages at Frohsdorf, has been to visit the Emperor's stables at the Louvre. He has criticised some of the former arrangements, and indicated fresh ones, and has taken little or no precaution to conceal in whose name this visit was made. I have strongly advised my agents to be discreet, for I would rather encourage the impatience of the Prince to visit France, an impatience which can only give good advice."

Two other members of the Cabinet, M. Ernoul and M. de la Bouillerie, had the same hopes and held the same language.

All this passed as if it were in a private family, and no Government was ever so accessible. Most of the Ministers lived in small and inconvenient houses, some lived in houses belonging to the palace, others had only their offices there, and had kept their modest deputies' lodgings. Many of our conversations took

place while we were walking in the park, sometimes at a late hour in the evening. No place is more imposing and impressive than those magnificent terraces of Versailles by moonlight and in perfect solitude when all the gates are shut. Sometimes I was invited to a modest and frugal repast. Among others I remember a breakfast at the house of M. Ernoul, Chancellor and Minister of Justice. He had his offices in the palace, and lived himself in a little apartment in the Place Hoche. The guests were the Duc. de Broglie, M. Beulé, M. de la Bouillerie, and myself. As Madame Ernoul was in Poitou, I was requested, as a compliment, to take the place of the mistress of the house. We were served by a woman—the cook, I think. She set the dishes on the table, and to make the work easier, did not quite close the door which communicated with the kitchen. The cat formed one of the party, just as in Octave Feuillet's "Village," and I saw at a particular moment that the poor animal was trying to open the door with its paw and could not succeed. I rose, helped her out, and returned to my place.

"It is easy to see that you are replacing Madame Ernoul," said my host to me without moving. "She would have done just the same."

And the conversation, which turned on subjects of the greatest importance, resumed its course without a break. Certainly no men in office ever had less of the arrogance or intoxication of power. The sentiments and habits of private life mingled with the

duties of public life, and took away all idea of Machiavellism. I was so struck with this kind of simplicity and true moral dignity that I said to M. Beulé the day after—

"You have all the letters opened that leave Versailles, do you not?"

"What do you mean?" he said with a grave and almost offended look.

"Oh!" I resumed, "do not be angry; I wish you could have seen the letter which I wrote to my wife yesterday, and the description I gave of your patriarchal Government. It would have been easier for me than to tell you of its contents to your face."

I found among my letters kept by my wife the one of which I spoke to M. Beulé. It contains the following passage:—

"This Government is really quite touching when one sees into it. They all live as friends together, without ceremony, without carriage, without men-servants, without quarrels; small houses, little breakfasts at twenty-five sous, and withal the sincerest desire to do good. Unfortunately this last matter is not always the easiest, and an article in the *Union* of yesterday evening hints that the messenger of the Light Horse, M. Combier, a very ardent Light Horse himself, will return this evening having met with a rebuff. However, no one wishes to despair beforehand, no one is angry, every one mourns."

The next day, October 4th, I added—

"M. Combier appears to have accomplished his mission well. He was well received and politely listened to, but he has only brought back an evasive answer. It is an acceptance rather than a refusal, but it is neither distinctly the one or the other."

Before separating for its vacation the Assembly left

behind it a permanent Commission, whose members frequently met at Versailles. Thus I had occasion to see General Changarnier, the Duc d'Audiffret-Pasquier, the Duc Decazes, all three strongly attached to the project of monarchical restoration, and wishing for its success with all their hearts. The Duc Pasquier said to me, "You cannot imagine with what joy I shall greet this return. My name belongs to old France, and my heart will beat only easily when we can advance towards the future without denying the past." The Duc Decazes went still further; he told me with an accent of deep conviction and sincerity that did not admit of a doubt, "I was born in the folds of the white flag; my father and I owe everything to the Restoration. How could I hesitate to follow a political track which is that of my traditions, that in which I was educated, and that of my most deeply-rooted feelings?" And he added with complacency that King Louis XVIII. had held him at the baptismal font, and that he had been named Louis after that prince. As for General Changarnier, reminding me with pride that he had formerly been an officer of the Royal Guard, he said, "I did not break off my career in 1830, for I was only a soldier, and I could not endure the idea of locking away my sword in a drawer; but I have always deplored the Revolution of July; I never concealed my sentiments from the Orleans princes, and they have never varied in their kindness to me because of it. You know what I said to you in 1849 and 1850."

And recurring to his darling illusions, he added: "If they had trusted me in 1851 we should have had the monarchy sixteen years ago, and we should have lost neither Alsace nor Lorraine, nor the glory of our arms."

These sentiments were so strong, so clearly defined, and I believe more than ever so sincere, that they survived even the return of M. Combier from Frohsdorf, bearing with him the same words and impressions as the two ambassadors who had preceded him—nothing more, nothing less. The irresolute were certainly discouraged. But, on the contrary, all those whom patriotism had bound to the cause of Legitimacy summed up the situation thus: M. le Comte de Chambord persists in a scruple and in a spirit of self-love to which we cannot sacrifice France. We must take away the scruple, satisfy the "amour propre," and we ought to spare nothing for that result, since the salvation of the country depends upon it. General Changarnier said in his soldierly language—

"When one does not mean to surrender, but to blow up the citadel and be buried beneath its ruins, one does not constantly send heralds to parley. As M. le Comte de Chambord parleys he means to accept peace, and now it only remains to render it sufficiently honourable to guard against his refusal to sign it."

On the 5th October I wrote from Paris to my wife:—

"M. Baragnon, M. Chesnelong, M. de Meaux, and M. de Cumont, on leaving the meeting of the different sections of the Right, kindly came to take me to the Hotel des Ambassadeurs,

and we dined together at the Café d'Orsay, in a little room, where I could have details of the day before they were stale. It also was a deception, in the sense that it led to no definite settlement. However, nothing was discontinued, and a Commission had been chosen charged with the drawing up of an ultimatum, and this was to be the last effort. MM. de la Rochette, de Cazenove, and Louis Brun, though they were present at the meeting, said not a word, but they joined in nominating the Commission, composed of MM. Combier and Tarteron to represent the Light Horse; d'Audiffret-Pasquier, Daru, and Callet for the Right Centre; Baragnon, de Larcy, and Chesnelong for the moderate Right."

This Commission chose General Changarnier for its president, and obtained the name of "Commission of the Nine," from the number of its members.

At the meeting of the different Rights they had agreed upon the following bases: not to ask any personal act from the Comte de Chambord; to leave him a purely passive part to play till he entered France; to obtain, nevertheless, a certain guarantee without which there could be no possible majority in the Assembly nor help to expect from the army. This guarantee might result from a tacit but formal agreement, which should be confided to the friends of the Comte de Chambord who knew his intentions best.

These bases once admitted the search was begun for a formula fulfilling the double condition of a delicacy carried to its extreme limits towards the Prince, and a positive guarantee obtained in return.

I can bear witness here to the entire good faith and ardent desire to succeed which ruled the consideration and drawing up of this formal document,

for I was constantly associated with these agitating discussions.

Our dinner, or rather conference, at the Café d'Orsay, lasted more than two hours, and we only ended it when we had settled on some formula which appeared to us unassailable. It was thought to be so by the Commission of Nine, and was considered as a certain pledge of conciliation, and as the happiest solution possible of difficulties avoided or met in such measure as to satisfy every one. This document was thus formulated: "The tricolour flag is retained. It can only be changed by the King in concert with the Assembly."

I only quote that which refers to the flag, for it was the only obstacle, and as for the rest it was only forcing an open door, as M. Chesnelong said on his return from Salzburg.

From the Prince's point of view the document only demanded of him a vote of his friends in the Assembly without any declaration or participation on his part; it recognised besides his right later on to present the other solution, of which he was always speaking, but never in distinct terms.

From the point of view of the army and the Assembly, the document gave full guarantee in the case in point both to the one and the other. The army kept its flag; the flag would receive the Prince on the frontier and accompany him to Paris, with the full consent of the Prince himself. It was not thought possible that after the first understanding, after this

first and reciprocal welcome of soldier and king, the solution of the King would be other than to place the fleurs-de-lis on the tricolour flag; but that every one would consent, or rather applaud, and if against all expectation—if the impossible should happen—the King cherished another design, this design would be submitted to the national representatives, who would decide in full liberty and would judge in the last resort.

M. Baragnon, with his southern eagerness which never excluded clearness and precision; M. de Meaux, with his just and delicate understanding of shades of thought; M. de Cumont, with his long literary habits and his subdued animation; M. Chesnelong, with his long experience of points of view outside the Legitimist party, to which he had only attached himself after our recent disasters, and with that scrupulous conscientiousness inseparable from the religious sentiment which had always ruled him; all these had looked in every light at the words, the ideas, the caution which would not lose sight of the danger, the danger which did not exclude caution. Every one had added or taken away something, every one had pointed out or smoothed over a difficulty, and I affirm once more, in all the sincerity of my conscience, that never were the interests of a prince and a country discussed with more love, respect, and devotedness. As soon as the proposal was definitely adopted by the Commission of Nine, M. Chesnelong was selected to take it to M. le Comte de Chambord, then at Salzburg, whither he had gone in order to be nearer

France, and to follow more closely this last negotiation of which the success seemed from henceforth certain. We were all mistaken, as the event has only too surely proved, but we were deceived by an error which I for one would not exchange for anything in the world with one of the sentiments which were to prevail at Salzburg at the last moment. I have come upon a note which M. Baragnon wrote to me after our cruel disenchantment, and I recognise while reading it all our emotions and our inspirations of that period. "I shall not forget, any more than you, the drawing-room on the Quai d'Orsay, where we shared such dear hopes. For the first time these many years we had confidence. What has become of these dreams, which were nevertheless so reasonable?"

One more precaution had been taken. M. Lucien Brun, who represented the Assembly and generally transmitted the ideas of the Comte de Chambord direct from himself, was to arrive at Salzburg at the same time as M. Chesnelong, and, in the name of the extreme Right, use the same expressions that M. Chesnelong would use to the Comte de Chambord as representing all the groups of the majority.

From that moment we considered the monarchical victory as certain. The Duc de Broglie alone continued to have some doubts, and with his accustomed frankness he did not attempt to conceal them from me. He said:

"You see with what eagerness I work and we all work at smoothing away the difficulties which still

keep the King from the throne. However, the men who are in power have a greater responsibility than the rest—a responsibility with regard to the country and with regard to the Marshal, whom we must not entangle in so perilous an enterprise. We must, therefore, bear in mind the obstinacy of which M. le Comte de Chambord has more than once given proof already. We must consider the rebuff of M. Chesnelong as possible, and, in this hypothesis, prepare ourselves a second solution which will prevent the complete route of the Conservative party. That incomplete and defective combination, about which I am under no illusions, would have but a temporary power, but would last long enough to pacify and raise the country, which we would entrust to the Marshal if he would accept this aggravation of the burden which he undertook with such repugnance. Failing him, the post might be offered to some other person of equal weight, the Orleans princes being, of course, excluded: firstly, because they have entered into a certain compact with the head of their house; secondly, because we could not deprive ourselves of the support of any of the Conservative forces any more than on the 24th of May, and the competition of any one of the Orleans princes, would eliminate at once two out of the three groups of the majority."

I answered: "I do not share your opinion for two reasons, which are: I consider that it is impossible for M. le Comte de Chambord to refuse a proposal so reserved and delicate as that of which M. Chesnelong

is the bearer. I should consider the utterance of a doubt at Versailles as a great danger and a great crime while deliberations were proceeding and resolutions were being taken at Salzburg. How can you think that M. le Comte de Chambord would refuse when he is offered the throne, not only under unhoped-for conditions after his manifesto of July 5th, 1871, but on the most favourable terms that have ever been offered at any restoration—without foreign intervention, without the chance of civil war, with the help of the existing Government, of the army, and of a Constituent Assembly drawn together by universal suffrage? Who could invent or dream of anything more? If the Comte de Chambord requires anything further his pretensions would go beyond the limits of any blindness that has ever been known. If, while comprehending the splendid chance which is presented to him at this moment, he fails to understand anything, to sacrifice anything, apart from a document the deplorable effect of which has been so sadly made manifest, then he will have carried inconsistency to an incredible degree. He will be condemned for receiving communications for several months without at once refusing to listen, for constantly repeating that he has a plan with regard to the flag, and for persisting in one objection, which is answered by M. de Chesnelong's proposal—an objection which consists solely in his resolve to speak only in France and to the whole of France. I shared your anxiety when I first came to Versailles, but I could not continue to do so

after all I saw and heard here. Never was a more splendid offer made; if the crown is refused it will be in the most thoroughly incomprehensible circumstances. Let us set aside this hypothesis, which is not only inadmissible but absolutely insulting. If it should be perceived that you are thinking of another alternative than the establishment of the monarchy, take care you are not suspected of doing so from mere prudence, and that you are not accused of doing so out of calculation for your own interests."

The Duc de Broglie, though he did not share my confidence and still continued in his doubts, which were so sadly confirmed by the event, was however touched by my arguments; and certainly what had the most influence on him was the appearance of duplicity which shocked him as soon as he perceived it. His mind is too upright, I may add too lofty, not to have an invincible and natural horror for the least shadow of hypocrisy or dissimulation. He made up his mind, then, in order to remove all suspicion, to do more than I asked him, and to compromise himself by engaging personally in the work of the restoration. He chose the occasion, quite spontaneously, of an agricultural meeting which was to be held near an old abbey in Normandy, to deliver a discourse which was violently and on just grounds attacked by the Republican press, for in view of the vote in question, he sought above all to remove the apprehensions to which the re-establishment of the Monarchy might give rise.

"Whatever," he said, "may be the form of government which the National Assembly bestows on France by virtue of the power it derives from you, no sacrifice of the social conditions to which we are all attached will be required; we all wish for a strong and settled Government, always ready to repress anarchy and rebellion, but raised above faction; one which will guarantee the fruit of the day's labour and the morrow's pay to the working man; one which will seek out in our past, troubled by so many revolutions, all its glorious memories without disowning a single one, and which will secure us the future of our hopes. We desire a Government which will understand the requirements of modern societies as well as their dangers, which will accept their principles, lending its authority to them, and only repudiating their excesses. Such will be, whatever the craft of powerless factions may insinuate, the Government which the Assembly will give us; it will never lend its sanction to any other, and it is in this confidence that we respectfully await the decision that she alone has the power to make."

It was not possible to show more deference to the national will, nor to announce more clearly the monarchical solution which every one expected.

On their side, the Conservative party and even the *Journal des Debats* greeted so decided a profession of political faith with the greatest warmth.

As matters were taking such a regular course, and one so in harmony with my life-long desire, which had

survived in my heart all deceptions, all defeats, all trials, I had no longer any business either in Versailles or Paris. I returned to Bourg-d'Iré to my ordinary life, with a much lighter heart, and I remained in this happy state for about ten days.

My first pleasant impression was on reading in the papers of the return and success of M. Chesnelong. He had given an account of his mission to the Committee of Nine, and though his language was not given word for word, the general tenor of it was published, and it was in substance as follows:—

The Assembly communicates its wishes to the Prince; the Prince agrees to them, and the army retains its flag. Some journals added "provisionally," others "definitively."

I give below the official report, not published till afterwards, of the sitting of the Committee of Nine; at which were present, besides M. Chesnelong, General Changarnier, Comte Daru, the Duc d'Audiffret-Pasquier, Baron de Larcy, M. Callet, M. Baragnon, M. Combier, and M. Tarteron.

Having stated that, according to the intentions of the Commission, he went not to lay down conditions, but to point out, with all respect, the possibilities and necessities of the situation, as well as the duties which resulted from them, and were incumbent on the different Monarchical parties in the Assembly, M. Chesnelong entered into a detailed account of the considerations he had submitted to the Prince, either on the constitutional question or that of the flag; he did

homage to the noble sentiments of honour, generosity, courage and patriotism, with which all the words of the Prince were impregnated.

"The Prince said notably, 'I have never had, and shall never have, the vulgar desire of power for its own sake, but I should be happy to consecrate my powers and my life to France, as she has always had my heart and soul. I have suffered far from her, and she has not been happy apart from me. We are necessary to each other.'"

"M. de Chesnelong then stated precisely the following points as the result of these interviews.

"As regards the constitutional question: M. Chesnelong announced that he had stated the intention of the Commission to rest the proposal of the Monarchy on the principle of the recognition of royal hereditary right and on a charter which should neither be forced on the King nor granted by him, but should be discussed by both King and Assembly."

"The Comte de Chambord expressed his acquiescence in these first two points.

"M. Chesnelong then said that, according to the ideas of the Commission, the proposal should indicate the principal articles of the charter to be discussed, especially the four following:—

"The collective exercise of the legislative power by the King and two Chambers; the attribution to the King of the executive power; the inviolability of his person; and, as a necessary consequence of the royal inviolability and the co-operation of the Chambers in

the work of legislation, ministerial responsibility. He added that the Commission had been unanimous in recognising the necessity of these four points and their expression in the declaration of the re-establishment of Monarchy.

"M. Chesnelong stated also that the proposal stipulated for the maintenance of civil and religious liberty, equality in the eye of the law, free access of all citizens to civil and military employment, the annual voting of the taxes by all the representatives of the nation, and in general of the guarantees which constitute the public rights of the French; explaining that this stipulation was necessary, assuredly, not because there was any ground to distrust the intentions of the Comte de Chambord, who in all his letters has declared that these rights were as dear and sacred to him as to every Frenchman, but to remove all ground for unjust attacks which tend to mislead the public mind.

"The Comte de Chambord has raised no objection, either to this mode of proceeding, or to the proposal of these different points, or to any one of them. As for the question of the flag, M. Chesnelong stated that he had explained to the Comte de Chambord, without omitting any of the considerations with which he was charged in the name of his colleagues, the weighty reasons which, arising from the state of the public mind in the country, the army, and the Assembly, had led the Commission to decide on the following declaration: The tricolour flag is retained; it can only

be modified by agreement between the King and the Assembly.

"The Comte de Chambord permitted M. de Chesnelong to express himself with respectful freedom, and was good enough to listen with the most gracious attention.

"He showed anxiety to keep intact, in the interests of the country, the two forces which seemed necessary for him to fulfil his royal duty—the integrity of his principles and the integrity of his character; and he respected the feeling of the army for a flag stained with the blood of so many of our soldiers; he has not been a stranger to the glories and sufferings of his native country; he has never had any intention of humiliating either his country or the flag under which her soldiers have so valiantly fought.

"His resolutions were drawn up in the two following paragraphs:

"1. M. le Comte de Chambord does not ask that anything shall be changed in the flag before he has taken possession of the power.

"2. He waits for the opportunity of presenting to the country, and feels confident that he will obtain from it by means of its representatives, at a suitable time, a solution compatible with his honour, and one which he believes to be of a nature to satisfy the Assembly and the nation."

"M. Chesnelong, no longer speaking for the Comte de Chambord, but for M. Lucien Brun, M. de Carayon-Latour, and M. de Cazenove, who had been with him at Salzburg, declared that his honourable colleagues

had accepted for themselves and their friends the clause: "The tricolour flag is retained; it can only be modified by the King and Assembly acting in concert;" but they wished it to be understood that they retained perfect freedom to vote as they pleased when the King should present the solution which was the object of the reserve above mentioned.

"Having given these explanations, M. Chesnelong asked that an official report should be drawn up, in order to relieve him of all responsibility. To this the Commission consented."

The *Union*, which at first had hailed, like every one else, the mission and the return of M. Chesnelong, changed its attitude, hinting enigmatically at certain reticences. But what did it matter? The impulse was given, the tide of Monarchy rose day by day, old convictions were exulting, different interests were brought to harmonious action, and the losers themselves, with very few exceptions, appeared more than resigned to their defeat. After that, who could imagine that a word more or less in an official report, that an angry expression or an indecorous one on the part of an absolutely free press, could have the slightest influence on such a national event?

But the hints of the *Union* became more and more explicit; some anxiety arose, some anxious glances were turned towards royalty, when on Friday evening, the 31st October, there appeared in the *Union* the following letter addressed to M. Chesnelong:—

"Salzburg, October 27th, 1873.

"Sir,

"I have such a pleasant remembrance of your visit to Salzburg, I have conceived such profound esteem for your noble character, that I do not hesitate to address you as frankly as you approached me.

"We have conversed for long hours on the destinies of our dearly-loved country, and I know that on your return you have uttered words to your colleagues which have won you my lasting gratitude.

"I thank you for having so well understood the anguish of my soul, and for having concealed nothing of the unchangeable firmness of my resolutions.

"I was not therefore troubled when public opinion, carried away by a current which I deplore, stated that I had consented to become the lawful King of the Revolution. I had as guarantee the testimony of a right-minded man, and I resolved to keep silence as long as I was not forced to appeal to your good faith.

"But since, in spite of your efforts, misunderstandings have arisen, seeking to cloud the open sky of my policy, I owe the whole truth to a country which may misunderstand me, but which does justice to and appreciate my sincerity, because I have never deceived it and never shall do so.

"I am asked to-day to sacrifice my honour. What can I answer? if not that I retract nothing, that I abate nothing, of my previous declarations. The claims of to-day give me to understand what the demands of to-morrow will be, and I cannot consent to inaugurate a reign which should be full of strength and restoration by an act of weakness.

"You know it is the fashion to contrast the strength of Henri IV. with the cleverness of Henri V. The 'violent' love I bear my subjects, it is often said, would render everything possible and honourable to me.

"I claim in this respect to yield in nothing to him, but I should like to know what lesson he would have read to the imprudent person who should have dared to urge him to abjure the standard of Arques and Ivry.

"You belong, sir, to the province of his birth, and you will be of the same opinion as myself, that he would have quickly disarmed the speaker, saying to him with his Bearnais wit,

'Friend, take my white flag, it will always show you the way to honour and victory.'

"I am accused of not holding the valour of our soldiers in sufficient esteem, and that at the moment when I am seeking to entrust to them all that I hold most dear. It is forgotten that honour is the common birthright of the house of Bourbon and of the French army, and that on that subject we could not fail to understand each other.

"No, I despise none of the glories of my country, and God alone has seen my tears which, in my distant exile, have flowed when the children of France in good or evil fortune have shown themselves worthy of her.

"But we have a great work to accomplish together. I am ready, quite ready to undertake it, when I am wanted, to-morrow, to-night, at this moment. That is the reason why I wish to remain just what I am. If I were lessened to-day I should be powerless to-morrow.

"Conditions are spoken of: was one imposed on that young prince whose loyal embrace I returned with so much happiness, and who, only listening to his patriotism, came spontaneously to me, bringing in the name of all his family assurances of peace, of devotedness, and reconciliation?

"Guarantees are wanted: were any asked of the Bayard of modern times on the memorable night of the 24th May, when his modest worth was charged with the glorious mission of calming his country by one of those speeches of an honest soldier which reassure the good and make the evil to tremble?

"I have not, it is true, wielded, like him, the sword of France on twenty battlefields; but I have for forty-three years preserved intact the sacred treasure of our traditions and our liberties. Thus I have the right to reckon on the same confidence, and I ought to inspire the same security.

"I myself am nothing; my principle is everything. France will see the end of her trials when she understands that. I am the necessary pilot, the only one capable of conducting the ship into port, because it is my mission, and because I have the necessary authority.

"You can do much, sir, to dispel misunderstandings and to prevent falling away in the hour of combat. Your comforting words on leaving Salzburg are always in my mind: 'France

cannot perish, for Christ still loves his Franks, and when God resolves to save a nation he takes care that the sceptre shall be given only into hands firm enough to wield it.'

"HENRI."

The effect of this publication was at once disastrous; there were no two opinions among the Royalists; the strongest partisans of the Monarchy were the loudest in expressing their despair. Early the next morning, all the deputies of the majority who were in Paris hastened to General Changarnier, president of the Committee of Nine, and at that numerously attended meeting, composed of all shades of the Right, not a doubt was expressed as to the impossibility of continuing the monarchical enterprise for the time. The feeling of all was expressed at first by the tears which flowed down the cheeks of General Changarnier, and in the heartbroken words of M. Chesnelong, who exclaimed, in a voice which expressed patriotic affliction far more than wounded personal feeling, "I appeal from the King to God!"

The members of the extreme Right, who were almost all present at the meeting, when consulted as to the decision which it was best to take in the interests of the country and the Royalist party, requested to be allowed to discuss it during the day. They met in the afternoon at the house of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld-Bisaccia. Acknowledging that the return of the Comte de Chambord had become impossible, but that the interests of France and the Monarchy should not suffer by that, the meeting

decided that in the interval required for the smoothing away of misunderstandings, the Prince de Joinville should be invited to become Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, as the Monarchy was the only means of saving the country. They went immediately to the Prince, who replied that he could only accept office from the Assembly and the Comte de Chambord. It was a refusal, for it was not to be supposed that the Comte de Chambord would give his consent.

No one thought, moreover, of discussing the different points in the letter from Salzburg. Between the lines, it showed an evident vagueness in the sentiments and resolutions. In reality, while the Prince thanked M. Chesnelong and promised him eternal gratitude, he at the same moment declined and destroyed all the results which M. Chesnelong had drawn from his long interviews with him.

He asked what Henri IV. would have answered on the morrow of the victories of Arques and Ivry, forgetting that Henri IV. had kept faith with his friends, and that his white plume had led them on to victory; that his descendant, unfortunately, had not been able to win the same position, and that his faithful subjects could address him, after his forty years of exile, in language which the victorious prince was never fated to listen to. He forgot also that if victory had consecrated the flag of Henri IV., Henri IV. had not thought himself above all concession, that he had yielded to his subjects in the most solemn matter of

all, that of embracing a religion which was not his own and against which he had long fought.

Finally, the Comte de Chambord was astonished that guarantees were asked of him which were not asked of "the modern Bayard," not perceiving the absolute difference of the two positions—that the Assembly had no guarantees to ask of Marshal MacMahon, who was its simple delegate, and did not in his own person represent eight centuries of royalty, while the overwhelming importance of the Comte de Chambord's birth caused vexation to a large part of the French nation, and that it was because of the immense power to be confided to him that he was asked what use he would make of it in a matter which the greater part of the nation had much at heart.

All political men, whom their patriotism had led directly or indirectly into these negotiations, had certainly the right to feel profoundly hurt at the indifference with which they were abandoned and given up as butts to the insulting sarcasms and recriminations which misfortune invariably calls down. Let us do them this justice, they only complained of the misfortune of the country and the uncertainty of a future which could not be viewed without terror.

The press reflected the different impressions of each party. The papers which were decidedly Monarchist did not conceal their profound chagrin; the journals which had only lately joined the fusion expressed their regret, but were soon consoled by other prospects; the

Journal des Débats, among others, said plainly, "The Comte de Chambord had in his hand the destiny of royalty but not of France." The Republican and Bonapartist journals triumphed, did not disguise their joy, and were not sparing in significant praises of the Prince who caused it. The *Union* alone accepted, without hesitation this time, the letter from Salzburg, and seemed to hail in it its own policy. That was bad enough, but, as it had done shortly after the manifesto of the Comte de Chambord, it went on to take the offensive against all the men, of whatever opinion, who had toiled together for the King's recall. It might have said, "These men are mistaken in their views, but gratitude is due to them for their intentions. At the last moment the King has not been able to make up his mind to the sacrifice asked of him, but he acknowledges the spirit in which the sacrifice was asked." No, the article on the Salzburg letter was at once an accusation and an insult, more or less enigmatic, more or less disguised, but always tending to the same end and always directed against the same men

A friend of the Duc de Broglie, also a friend of mine, who went to see him some hours after the publication of the manifesto, found him with his head buried in his hands and his whole bearing downcast. "What a misfortune!" he said in a broken voice. "What a misfortune! And you will see that in six weeks it will be said that it is my fault." It did not take six weeks, not even six days. On Monday, November 3rd, the *Union* began thus—

"Concord existed yesterday. Why is it broken to-day?

"The interview of Salzburg had knitted the bond, and now it is claimed that the royal letter from Salzburg has destroyed it!"

And some lines lower the *Union* added—

"To break up the bundle of monarchist forces on this point is to confess that the union was not sincere."

The article ended thus—

"The Assembly must keep to the resolutions which it has taken, if it does not wish to be accused by the country of having lent an ear to intrigue."

In a second article of the same number there was still more:—

"Wiped out is the nation which, having such a king at hand, is afraid to call him because he has too much loyalty, too much virtue, and too much genius!"

The *Union*, and the men whose organ it was, did not stop here; they tried at the same time to efface and keep the Salzburg letter, to maintain that it was the expression of a great thought, but that it did not intend and ought not to change the situation.

No matter that this strange paradox was universally rejected. The *Union* persisted none the less in its argument, and even sought to involve the Orleans Princes as witnesses in its favour.

"There are some," said this journal in its edition of November 6th, "there are some who professed to doubt as to the union which has taken place in the house of Bourbon since August 5th, and some Royalists have

themselves offered the power to the Orleans princes, but these latter have refused all such advances. They have given the Royalists a memorable lesson and taught the world the worth of the blood royal of France. They lead us now, and they teach us by their example what certain of us seem to have forgotten—the respect due to the house of Bourbon."

This same number was almost entirely devoted to combating the prorogation of Marshal MacMahon's powers, an idea which was gaining ground everywhere, since that of the Lieutenant-General had been set aside. It was easy for it to show how dangerous the situation was, but instead of indicating the danger to the King it sought to foist it on the Assembly alone. It quoted this story from the *Espérance du Peuple*, a Nantes newspaper:

"M. le Duc d'Audiffret-Pasquier described the situation to the letter when he said, after reading the King's letter, 'We are lost!'"

And it quoted the following remark from the *Decentralisation*—

"A strange thing has happened at Lyons in the midst of the confusion which followed the royal letter. It was among the Conservative public which is not Legitimist that the emotion was greatest and that regrets are most loudly expressed. It is the readers of journals which are opposed to royalty who are the most disappointed and the most uneasy to-day."

How was it that the *Union* did not perceive that it was heaping up testimonies against itself, and against its own friends, and that the accusation of duplicity

would recoil upon them? How did it fail to see that its attitude gave reason to suppose that they had speculated on the embarrassment of the Assembly which was to meet on November 7th, that they had taken care to avoid precise declarations till the day when there was every reason to believe that the fusionist members of the Assembly, placed suddenly between the appearance of the white flag and the fear of the red, would not hesitate to pass over a less important question in order to avert a capital danger? And by what serious motive, by what plausible pretext, could they justify the reproach of intrigue and disloyalty which they addressed to the men who had just staked their political all on the return of the Monarchy?

Setting on one side uprightness of intention and loyalty of character, let us only allude to personal interest and ambition. From this point of view what could be feared by the men who were to open the gates of France to the King, the men who held the power, either as members of the Government or leaders of the majority, and who assuredly had no need to make stipulations in order to reckon on the gratitude of a prince who owed his crown to them even more than to his own friends? What honours were wanting to Monk at the Restoration of Charles II.? What men were forgotten in 1814 and 1815 by Louis XVIII. and the Comte d'Artois, out of all those who knew in time to submit the Revolution to the Monarchy? What could the ephemeral and then quite uncertain power

of Marshal MacMahon or of any one else offer which was to be compared in durability, solidity, and brilliancy? If we are to suppose that the men who went to meet the Comte de Chambord had the foregone design and plan of raising obstacles in his path, and of filling him with disgust, one must not only misunderstand the facts, the testimonies, the characters, but one must go against the commonest good sense; one would have to admit that these "intriguers, ambitious men, sharp fellows," as they were styled, had not even the most elementary idea of talent or ambition.

As for M. le Comte de Chambord, we may believe that he did not fathom his own ideas perhaps as far as those who defended him so awkwardly, and that he did not understand the effect which would be produced in France by a letter, in which he wished, as he said, to confirm M. Chesnelong's testimony. His surprise was so great and his disillusion so profound that he resolved at once to leave Austria and come incognito to France, to undo by his presence the impression that his letter had made, and combat in person against any temporary arrangement which would not recognise his rights and the re-establishment of his throne. He went secretly to Versailles to one of the men in his confidence, M. de Vanssay, and made him ask, through M. de Blacas, for a personal interview with Marshal MacMahon. The Marshal replied that if any danger threatened M. le Comte de Chambord he was ready to defend him at the peril of his life; but that his duty towards the Assembly and

his Ministry forbade his loyalty to accept the secret interview which was demanded; and it did not take place.

The Comte de Chambord saw very few friends, appeared to them very anxious, almost irritated, never went out in order not to run the risk of being recognised, and heard mass every morning in a little chapel fitted up in M. Vanssay's house, a mass which was said by one of the Capuchin fathers of Versailles, who were greatly touched by the ardent prayers and piously devout attitude of the descendant of St. Louis.

The anxiety of M. le Comte de Chambord was so poignant that during the night sitting which was to grant or refuse the prolongation of Marshal MacMahon's powers, he went, it is said, wrapped in a long mantle, to await the result at the foot of the statue of Louis XIV. It is added that one or two confidential persons came from time to time to give him an account of the speeches, the incidents, the fluctuations of the Assembly, and that when the final vote was taken, when it was told this Prince, so deceived and so unfortunate, that almost all the members of the extreme Right had voted for the Septennate, the bitterness of his despair was such that he exclaimed with a bitter cry, "My God, is not France punished enough!"

On the morrow he reached Paris, was present in a closed carriage at the march-past of some regiments on the Esplanade of the Invalides, and set out again for an exile of which God only knows the end.

There is no destiny more pathetic in all history, and he who deliberately is lacking in respect sins not only against great misfortune and great virtue, but is probably wanting in justice. I, who have only sought to devote my life or my death to him, attribute his most undeniable mistakes less to his intentions than to a failure in judgment and the blindness of the counsels which have constantly been given to him, and which he has followed too faithfully.

The Comte de Chambord, according to my idea, had three courses open to him. If he believed the white flag to be indispensable to the Monarchy, and that it would not arouse prejudice in France, he could have seized it at one of our revolutions, have taken Henri IV. boldly for his model, and have asserted his rights, as he understood them, or died for them. If the Comte de Chambord had not that entire faith in France and himself, why did he refuse to accept the compromise of the fleurs-de-lis on the tricolour flag, and refuse to seal the union of the two symbols, the reconciliation of the two great parties which have so sadly divided and weakened France? How could he continue to speak as if he only believed in the magic of the white flag, and to remain inactive, if he was convinced of the invincible power of the tricolour flag? Finally, if he were really enlightened on the situation of our unfortunate country, and acknowledged the necessity of a painful concession to which he could not force himself, a third issue was open to him—abdication. No act of self-sacrifice has ever lowered, much less dishonoured any one. Abdi-

cation has been the honour of a King and the salvation of a nation many a time. A double abdication had prematurely placed the crown on the head of Henri V. himself, and all monarchists had greeted in this act of his grandfather and his uncle a noble and generous submission to the cruel necessities of a hard position.

But to avoid adopting either of the three courses, to mingle the three lines of conduct, was to win neither profit nor dignity from either, to hint at concessions, and then suddenly withdraw them on the eve of the decisive day; to approach near enough to success to make it possible, and, emboldened by the near approach of victory, to compromise and break up all by an incomprehensible want of foresight, or by too great precipitation in seizing a fruit which a little wisdom and prudence would have placed in his hand—this was the inexplicable conduct which, to our stupefaction and the misfortune of us all, undid all our earnest attempts at monarchical restoration and national salvation!

Tossed about without a pilot in the midst of the tempest, will France ever again see the port which we believed for a moment she was about to enter? I will not despair of it. It is in any case the secret of her return to her past greatness or of the settled decay towards which perfidious currents are drawing her to-day.

However that may be, I shall, before returning to God, have given my testimony to those of my contemporaries whom I have been mixed up with in the

struggle of events, and who have deserved best of their Church and their country. Contradiction and ingratitude have neither shaken their faith nor wearied their patriotism. The failure of their efforts did not discourage them, and if they do not, as I hope, succeed in finally saving the country, they will at least have saved their conscience before God and their honour before men, when the day of justice and impartiality shall have dawned.

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